The Pasternak Affair:

COURAGE OF GENIUS

A DOCUMENTARY REPORT BY *Robert Conquest*

J. B. Lippincott Company
Philadelphia and New York
1962

Published in England in 1961 under the title *Courage of Genius.*

Printed in the United States of America
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 62–11330

FOR PHILIP LARKIN

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

FIVE YEARS AGO the name of Boris Pasternak was only known, as that of a great poet, to those interested in Russian literature. With the publication of *Doctor Zhivago*, the award to him of the Nobel Prize, and the actions taken against him and, after his death, against his friend Olga Ivinskaya, he and his work became and remain the center of a great controversial storm, engaging world opinion as much as the urgent issues of public life.

This was as it should be, for the Pasternak affair raised in dramatic form some of the deepest problems of art, of ethics and of politics. But a full account of the facts, a complete presentation of the documentary evidence, and an adequate review of the many subsidiary arguments which arose have not yet been available. The main intention of this book is, as far as possible, to fill this want.

It has seemed necessary to describe Pasternak's origins, experiences, ideas and literary intentions, in order to give something in the nature of a full context. But these have been largely drawn from his own words. The biographical pages here do not make a biography, nor the literary pages a critique: in particular I have avoided anything in the nature of a full 'critical estimate,' or at least confined such literary analysis as seems essential to the main theme to the descriptive, and particularly to the sides

of Pasternak's work most unambiguously accessible even to the foreign commentator.

On controversial matters of fact, literary taste or moral judgment, since I do not myself pretend to abnormal impartiality, I have taken instead opinions expressed by a number of those most qualified to do so; and, in particular, in each case, of those whose political or other commitments might ordinarily be inclined to bias them in a contrary direction. There is thus no accumulation, at least on Pasternak's side, of what might be regarded as partisan views.

I have been deliberately sparing with illustrations of world literary opinion, and of the reactions of the general world public to the events described. It has seemed better to concentrate, where feasible, on the one hand on Pasternak's own comments and on the other on the views of Communists and other sympathizers with the Soviet attitude. In particular, I have kept much space for a presentation of the Soviet documents, as seems fair.

R. C.

London
October, 1961

THE PASTERNAK AFFAIR: *Courage of Genius*

Don't yell at me. But if you must yell,
at least don't do it in unison.

—Boris Pasternak

I

A MAN OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

On May 30, 1960 there died a man it might arouse controversy, but not surprise, to call the greatest Russian of the time. His death was announced in his own country, after a thirty-six-hour delay, in the following brief statement on the back page of the literary journal *Literature and Life*:

The board of the Literary Fund of the USSR today announces the death of Boris Pasternak, who was a member of the fund. The death took place on May 30 in his seventy-first year after a severe and long illness.

The normal course of events, when even a moderately well-known writer dies, is for an obituary to appear in the literary papers, signed by his colleagues. These signatures may number up to thirty or forty. When Alexander Fadeyev, who for years had headed the Soviet Union of Writers under Stalin and had lately been criticized and demoted in connection with the attack on the dead dictator, committed suicide on May 13, 1956, the papers published long obituaries, with his photograph; there was a special announcement from the Central Committee of the Communist Party; and a state funeral was organized.

While those in the Soviet Union had to be content with this brief word on Pasternak's death, Radio Moscow gave much greater coverage to the event in its foreign services. But this was mainly in repetition of the polemics which had been launched

against the poet at the time of the award of the Nobel Prize. For example, the Moscow English-language service, at 12:30 on June 1, argued that it was "clear even to every Soviet youth" that Sholokhov was an incomparably greater writer; that the Nobel award had been made "for purely political considerations"; and that "Pasternak himself realized . . . that he had failed to gain the readers' sympathy and so he concentrated on making translations of works by foreign authors." The reference to the ability of young Russians to judge books they have not read and the assertion that it was by his own choice that Pasternak did not publish original work for so many years, show the tone and the standard of what was being said.

Even Communists outside Russia treated the death differently. The organ of the Italian Communist Party, *Unità*, gave five columns to an event not mentioned at all in its Soviet equivalent in its issue of June 1, in which its Moscow correspondent is incidentally quoted as saying:

> The funeral on Thursday of Pasternak will take place at his wish in a religious form according to the Orthodox rite in the Church of the Transfiguration in Peredelkino where, in a little two-storied villa situated in the so-called "writers' village," the poet lived the greater part of the year. In his last will Pasternak has also stipulated that his mortal remains should be buried in the rural cemetery located a short distance from his house.

The dispatch was sent forty-eight hours before the funeral. If it represents Pasternak's wishes, it can only be said that they were not carried out in this form.[1]

Pasternak's funeral took place on June 2. The authorities ignored it, and no representatives of the Writers' Union or any other organization were present (though the Literary Fund appears to have paid for the coffin). Foreign correspondents were

[1] There have been previous occasions when secular funerals have been given to writers known for their religious views: for example, that in 1956 of the Armenian writer Avetik Isaakian, actually a member of the Ecclesiastical Assembly which had just elected the new Patriarch of Etchmiazin.

there. They gave full reports of the scene, which appeared in various newspapers in the West.

Ignoring official displeasure, about fifteen hundred Russians (who can only have learned of it by word of mouth) made up for the absence of formal delegations. They included local peasants, workers, and many students. Several well-known artists and writers defied the tacit ban and attended. The pianist Sviatoslav Richter played Chopin's Marche Funèbre and Beethoven's Funeral March on a small upright piano in the Pasternak house as friends and admirers came to pay their respects and leave flowers. The old author Konstantin Paustovsky was there, and Venyamin Kaverin, the short-story writer. Ilya Ehrenburg's wife Lyubov was present, and said that if Ehrenburg himself had not been away in Stockholm, he would have come too.

Twelve young men then bore the coffin to the Peredelkino graveyard, where it was buried at the foot of three pine trees. The poem "Hamlet" from *Doctor Zhivago* was read. Then the critic Valentin Asmus pronounced a eulogy. He said:

"There were few to equal him in the purity and honesty of his convictions. He will remain forever as an example, as one who defended his convictions before his contemporaries, being firmly convinced that he was right.

"He took Tolstoy's viewpoint, and never believed in resisting evil with force. And that was his mistake.

"His disagreement with the present day was not with the regime or the state, but he wanted a society of a higher order.

"He was a true democrat at heart. He followed sincerely the highest ideals of art and had the ability to express humanity in its highest terms. As long as Russian poetry lives on this earth, Pasternak's name will be among the great."[2]

It is fitting that Pasternak's burial called up the courage of the Russian intelligentsia.

As Asmus said at his grave, Pasternak was not a partisan of violent defiance. He believed in rendering Caesar his due. He

[2] Reports give these paragraphs with some variation in the order.

was not, it is true, prepared to do violence to his conscience in such matters as signing a condemnation of the soldiers shot in 1937, but such incidents were not the essence of his long struggle to preserve his own standards against the persistent demands of the most powerful and pervasive state ever known.

Courage in general is one thing, but something more is implied, as Edmund Wilson says in his review of *Doctor Zhivago* in *The New Yorker*, from which I have taken the title of this book:

> *Doctor Zhivago* will, I believe, come to stand as one of the great events in man's literary and moral history. Nobody could have written it in a totalitarian state and turned it loose on the world who did not have the courage of genius.

For this is not simple bravery. It consisted of an immense moral toughness, an ability to sweat it out year after year in the face of the overwhelming pressures of the vast and insistent machinery of power. When it denied his right to his views, this one man set up as an equal contender against it, and won. For it was impossible to shake him in his feeling that he was right and that the collective wisdom arrayed against him was absurdly wrong. Fortified by his principles, he died unbroken.

He was not a political absolutist. He was not wholly opposed to the Soviet system. When his father, his mother and his two sisters emigrated in 1921, when many of Russia's greatest, from Bunin to Tsvetaeva, were following the same road, it did not occur to Pasternak to go. Whatever qualms he may already have had about the new regime were nothing compared with the links he felt with the Russia behind the political storms. He detested the "unexampled cruelty," "the reign of the lie" of the Stalin terror, and even shrewdly analyzed its origins in the need to suppress the truth about collectivization—a "failure" as well as a "mistake." But he expected, in spite of all delays, that a new and freer Russia would emerge. As he says at the end of *Doctor Zhivago:*

Although victory had not brought the relief and freedom that were expected at the end of the war, nevertheless the portents of freedom filled the air throughout the postwar period, and they alone defined its historical significance.

For though Pasternak was in a sense apolitical, his attachment to Russia is not simply based on his unrivaled feeling for nature. It is no archaic attachment to the land merely. He says, also in the last chapter of *Doctor Zhivago:*

It has often happened in history that a lofty ideal has degenerated into crude materialism. Thus Greece gave way to Rome, and the Russian Enlightenment became the Russian Revolution.

It is of that Enlightenment that Pasternak was the heir. He maintained its values in the most difficult times, against the most powerful opponents, and he foresaw its eventual triumph. He told Mrs. Olga Carlisle in 1960: "There will be no return to those days or to those of our fathers and forefathers, but in the great blossoming of the future I foresee their values will revive."[3]

For Pasternak, as for the whole of the intelligentsia, Czardom was an alien, and largely a hostile phenomenon. The Enlightenment had found it a permanent obstacle, slow, stupid, ossified, bureaucratic, and in certain circumstances violently and viciously inclined. Yet though a weight on the chest of Russia, it was not quite a stifling one. It had been possible to breathe. Sometimes the State intervened against a writer, as when Gorky was expelled from the Academy, an event curiously paralleling Pasternak's own later expulsion from the Union of Soviet Writers (one difference lay in the uncensored protests of Gorky's colleagues, and the public resignation of Chekhov and others in sympathy). But, on the whole, cultural freedom was almost untrammeled.

Not that this was a sign of the autocracy's good will or good sense. Nor did it lead to any feeling of sympathy toward Czar-

[3] This and subsequent statements to Mrs. Carlisle are from her interview with Pasternak, published in *The Paris Review*, No. 24, 1960.

ism. It is only in retrospect that the good, or harmless, aspects of the time appear. The intelligentsia sympathized, however inactively, with the revolutionaries, who were, indeed, its product. In Soviet times Pasternak writes nostalgically of the early revolutionaries:

> The Perovsky girl, the Populist Freedom Party . . .
> Students pedantic in specs, nihilists smug in their smocks

as being as remote as Jason (*The Year 1905*).[4]

It was only in the last years of Czardom that the intellectual rebels began to give way to professional technicians of power like those earlier Russian revolutionaries of whom Pushkin had written that "they care little for their own skins, and still less for those of others."

The political and intellectual circumstances of the Russia of Pasternak's youth were very different from ours. It is necessary in dealing with Russian literature to make some very important distinctions between its general conditions and background and those which apply in certain countries of the West. In English, the great writers have been men like Dickens and Fielding, strongly connected with the more philistine sections of their society, and having the virtues of scope, humor and power rather than those of subtlety, depth and self-consciousness. In the English-speaking countries no separate 'intelligentsia' developed, alienated from society as a whole: the very word we use for such rudiments and imitations as we have is Russian. The forces which split Russia into a vast militarized bureaucracy with a single official view on the one hand, and the ways of thought of humanism and of revolution on the other, never made much progress with us. The result is that when, mainly in the present century, some of our writers have set up

[4] A curious link between our own times and the assassination by the Countess Perovskaya and her associates of the Czar Alexander II in 1881 is that the constructor of the bomb, Kibalchich, made, while in prison, what is believed to have been the first study of the possible use of the rocket for propulsion.

as great alienated martyrs and messiahs of art, they have usually appeared ridiculously pretentious, and their works boringly inflated, to our educated classes.

The point is that it is wrong to transfer such estimates to the Russian writers. The political and social circumstances of nineteenth-century Russia produced as a natural development what was later artificially and unsuccessfully transplanted to soils where it could not take root. And in the great Russian writers and thinkers we find seriousness without portentousness, high aims without egotism, an unself-conscious, unself-regarding effort to attain complete candor and complete charity about the human being.

The power of this enterprise is not spent. Its effect on the educated, and through them on the less educated, classes in Russia has been enormous, and persists, apparently ineradicably. It is clear that Pasternak regards the Enlightenment, rather than any political event, as the great achievement of Russia, and that he expects its spirit, in spite of being temporarily silenced, to prove an anvil which will break all hammers. The epochs of tyranny, he seems to feel, must eventually give way to this less ephemeral power. This may be thought the great context of his life and work.

It is impossible to do more than sketch the fairly well-known outline of Pasternak's development here. Nothing short of reprinting his two overtly autobiographical pieces, together with the essentially autobiographical sections of his verse and fiction, and adding to them his expressed opinions on a hundred themes in all the subtlety and freshness of his own words, would fully convey those years (if, indeed, even that would not contain too many reticences). For Pasternak's life and views are dependent, as he himself emphasizes, on detail:

> You ask who thus commands?
> —The all-powerful God of details,
> The all-powerful God of love . . .

and again,

> Life, like autumn silence,
> Is always deep in detail.
> (Both from "Epilogue 2")

Yet, this being so, a partial and sketchy adumbration of the main facts and ideas of his life is probably sufficient for our purposes.

Pasternak was born on January 29, 1890, into the heart of the Enlightenment. His father, Leonid Ossipovich Pasternak, of a Jewish family from cosmopolitan Odessa, was a painter, and his mother, Rosa Kaufman, a concert pianist. In the 'nineties and the first decade of the new century, Leonid Pasternak became an established figure in cultural circles. The friends who had the greatest effect on Boris were Tolstoy and Scriabin.

Of Tolstoy, Pasternak has written that "Our whole house was permeated with his spirit." His father illustrated Tolstoy's *Resurrection*, and the family were among the first to be summoned to see him after his horrible death. With Scriabin, Pasternak's connection was closer. The composer, a daemonic figure, had a particularly powerful influence because of Pasternak's early enthusiasm for music, induced by his mother. (It is not recorded if he knew the young Scriabin cousin who was to drop that name for Molotov, and, by a curious concatenation of circumstances, to be disgraced even before Pasternak himself.) In his teens Pasternak wished to become a musician, but he became dissatisfied with his technique and turned to literature.

He read law and then history at Moscow University, but finally turned to philosophy, then badly taught there. His mother earned some extra money to send him for a few months to Marburg, where Hermann Cohen, whom he greatly admired, taught the subject. The training in rigor, in thought as such, was to be of enormous value to him. But in Marburg he fell in love, and this is said to have been the crux which turned him toward the area in which love and philosophy meet—poetry.

This (unsuccessful) love, and its powerful effect, also heralded a life in which women, and the love of women, was to play a part as important as it does in *Doctor Zhivago*.

The other significant event of his youth was an accident at the age of twelve which left him with a limp, and was to result in his exemption from military service.

And so, in 1914, we find the young Pasternak having started to write poetry, deeply engaged in the poetic efflorescence of the time, with Bely and Mayakovsky (whom he first met in that year) and Blok and Yessenin and Akhmatova, the fantastically brilliant galaxy now emerging—and influenced too by his father's friend Rilke—but at the same time caught up like everyone else in a world heading for vast and destructive public events.

During the 1914 war Pasternak spent a good deal of time in the Urals, where he worked for a brief period in a chemical factory. This is the time described in "Two Excerpts," and also in *The Last Summer*, and it provided much material for *The Childhood of Luvers* and for *Doctor Zhivago*—being the one period of Pasternak's life when he was far away from Moscow. He returned to the city at the time of the February, 1917, Revolution. Thenceforward his life, apart from his first marriage (in 1923) and his second (in 1930 *de facto* and soon afterwards *de jure*), is largely to be seen in terms of his work, which we shall deal with later.[5] Yet, through all this period, he was experiencing the troubles afflicting the whole Russian people—the civil war, the famine, the Terror.

In *Doctor Zhivago*, Pasternak partly blames the horrors of the revolutionary years on the habits of killing and dying that the soldiery had brought back from the front. And the process not only brutalized them still further but, even worse, brutalized the

[5] The only other nonliterary and nonpersonal event of real importance was his visit to Georgia in 1930, a brief stay which, as is often the case with poets, stimulated him enormously—not only through his visual imagination, but also through contact with the Georgian poets.

executives of the ruling party, till they began to take cruelty as first a natural, and then a desirable, way of ruling.

Compared to Czarist times, the Soviet period has proved something of an ice age culturally. Yet, as with the physical ice ages, we can trace maxima and minima, periods of ice retreat and of extreme glaciation. The horrible days of civil war and famine, when survival was the main problem, were succeeded by the comparative warmth of the mid-'twenties. From 1929 to 1932 RAPP, the Party's "Association of Proletarian Writers," exercised a dictatorship over the writers. But upon its dissolution things became easier again.

That at this time at least, in the period before the great Terror, Pasternak looked even on Stalin with an unbiased eye is shown by a very curious and revealing incident. In 1932 Stalin's first wife died (in circumstances which have since been alleged to have been highly suspicious). This was, contrary to the usual Soviet practice of playing down the private lives of the leadership, made the occasion of something resembling public mourning. Among the groups expected to send condolences were the writers. A formal letter was composed, and signed by most of them. Pasternak, however, added a strange postscript on his own, saying that on the eve of Nadiezhda Stalin's death: "I was thinking, as an artist, continuously about Stalin for the first time. In the morning I read the news. I was shaken as if I had been on the spot and lived through and seen everything."[6]

Although this is hardly an expression of confidence in Stalin, it nevertheless shows a human, and nonpolitical, good will which may, by its very naïveté, have been one of the factors which turned the scale when the General Secretary was bloodily purging the cultural world, and have disarmed him when it came to any idea of liquidating Pasternak. During that purge, Stalin unexpectedly telephoned Pasternak and asked his opinion of Mandelshtam. Pasternak answered that he was a good poet.

[6] *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, November 17, 1932.

This did not save Mandelshtam from disgrace and death. But it is at least interesting that Stalin thought to consult Pasternak at all.

Whatever Pasternak may have hoped for from Stalin, in 1932, it faded in the terrible *Yezhovshchina*, the Terror of 1936–1938, a period when writers, like everyone else—in fact more than anyone else except Party officials—were subject to deportation and execution without trial or reason. The war brought a notable release, but it was succeeded by the rigors of the Zhdanov literary purge whose principles, though not quite so fiercely emphasized later as in the immediate postwar years, remained in force until 1953–54, when a brief thaw proved abortive, only to be followed by another in 1956–57, which also ended in recriminations. The reaction did not bring back the full force of Stalinism, but set the tone for the period which saw Pasternak's disgrace and death.

Pasternak, as a man of great sensitivity who has lived through periods of unexampled horror, is qualified to speak to us about suffering. He sees, not grand abstractions, but the real human being in his agony. And yet, he is qualified too, as in the Epilogue to *Doctor Zhivago*, to tell us that even horrible suffering is actually more tolerable to the human being than "the reign of the lie":

> It isn't only in comparison with your life as a convict, but compared to everything in the 'thirties, even to my easy situation at the university in the midst of books and money and comfort, that the war came as a breath of deliverance . . . its real horrors, its real dangers, its menace of a real death, were a blessing compared with the inhuman reign of the lie.

It is from the standpoint of one who has really understood and felt large-scale suffering that he considers the nuclear threat. It is perhaps self-centeredness generalized which makes us feel that our own, contemporary, troubles are the worst. Pasternak

wrote to Eugene Kayden in 1958, almost in passing: "Many forgotten periods of history were once thought to be the end of the world, like our present nuclear situation."[7]

This may seem a hard saying to many people. Yet, it is not only that Pasternak lived among death by the tens of millions in war, famine and purge, not only that he saw sufferings worse than these (and his refusal to sign Stalin's Peace Appeal against the atomic bomb, at the time of his own earlier disgrace, and of the height of the dictator's power, may show not merely that he realized the false and useless nature of the maneuver, but also that he knew how great were the suffering and slaughter possible without that particular weapon). It is not only, even, that he saw the human experience more *sub specie aeternitatis* than is possible to most of us.

We do not feel that Chaucer, writing his urbane sketches while a third of the population was dead of the Black Death and worse was expected, was being inhumane. Rather, he gives the impression that his human sympathies can be taken for granted, and perhaps that hysteria would help no one. And, on the contrary, the literature that we still read which concerns itself with the end of the world—the Revelation of St. John the Divine, the *Dies Irae*, the *Voluspa*—may impress by grandeurs, but does not give any strong impression of human sympathy.

At a time when it was thought that a conventional bombardment from the air would totally destroy cities and their inhabitants, Yeats could start a poem

I have heard that hysterical women say

that poets should worry about such issues. Yeats, though he had seen violence and felt revulsion from it, was not a humane man in the sense that Pasternak was. In him one can detect a certain hardness, a feeling that violence is justified if it can be dramatized into great art. It might be said that he sees it

[7] *Poems by Boris Pasternak*, translated by Eugene M. Kayden, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1959.

from the point of view of eternity, but his eternal is art; he does not see the real human under the tragic mask.

In Pasternak, on the contrary, we have no feeling that his long view, his deep art, have in any way hardened his human sensibility. We feel, on the contrary, that his attitude is based on a sounder comparison, a more encompassing humanity than is possible to weaker nerves.

Pasternak was born, as he says, a Jew. But his parents took little interest in religious observance, and when he sought a "channel of communication with the creator," he told a visitor, he "was converted to Russian Orthodox Christianity. But try as I might I could not achieve a complete spiritual experience. Thus I am still a seeker."[8]

His Jewish origins meant nothing to him. He was a Russian, steeped from childhood in the traditions and moods of his country. Thus, in spite of an attempt to inculpate him he escaped the anti-Semitism of Stalin's last years, which was an attack on Jews as a separate cultural entity, as in medieval times, rather than any expression of the newer racialist nonsense. Its final horror, the execution of all the major Yiddish writers in August, 1952, was kept secret at the time, but the arrest and torture of the Jewish doctors in the last months of Stalin's life formed a climax of terror from which everyone, Jews and Gentiles, expected the worst, when fortunately the dictator died, in March, 1953.

People in sensitive positions, like writers, who have to live under such conditions, are faced with difficult choices. To illustrate it most clearly, it seems appropriate to compare with Pasternak's line of conduct that practiced by another Soviet writer, his colleague and old acquaintance, Ehrenburg.

If Pasternak, with a sort of quiet intransigence, resisted Stalinism without any real compromise of his attitude, without maneuvering on his opponent's level, Ehrenburg's method of resistance was different. The present writer confesses to having

[8] *New York Herald Tribune*, August 7, 1960.

publicly misjudged Ehrenburg, writing that he was partly responsible (as the few survivors themselves said) for the execution of the Jewish writers in Stalin's day.

The real position seems to have been different, and more complicated. When Ehrenburg returned from exile in the 'twenties, he accepted the regime, and wrote a considerable amount of very able journalistic propaganda. His accounts of the Asturias rising of 1934, and the Vienna revolt of the same year, for instance, are far from the dreary hack work of the usual polemic, and were effective even outside of the borders of the USSR. In fact Ehrenburg became useful to Stalin. And now he seems to have found himself in a situation not uncommon in our age—that facing the subordinate or ally who does not oppose a ruthless oppressor, reasoning that, if he does, he will fall and be replaced by worse men without having achieved any good at all, whereas if he holds out he may be able to intervene at some critical moment, or play a useful part when things have changed. Such was the argument of many German collaborators with the Nazis. Even more, it was the considered plan of Laval. In those cases it largely failed, and failure following on moral compromise has given the idea a bad name, particularly among those who have never had to face such difficulties. But we are less likely to dismiss it entirely after the example of Cyrankiewicz in Poland, who for years was thought of as simply a traitor to the Socialist Party, but who, in 1956, was able to play an important role in the overthrow of the Stalinist regime in his country, simply because he had kept himself in a position of power.

The political cases are not quite the same as Ehrenburg's, but it is equally evident that his intervention under Stalin could have accomplished little but his own fall, while he has survived to be a voice, and a not easily ignorable voice, for liberalism in recent years, with *The Thaw* Part I and *Lessons of Stendhal*—both producing notable scandal among the bureaucracy. We have also seen his fairly clear indications of even the 'loyal'

intellectual's desire for freedom, and contempt for the regulators of literature—expressed even in interviews with foreigners.

So much is to Ehrenburg's credit, and it is in any case not for a foreigner who has never been faced with a situation of the sort to set up in judgment. Yet we may feel that Pasternak's way is a grander and more inspiring one.

It is also interesting to find, in the heart of the Party apparatus itself, a sign that the traditions of the intelligentsia may be ineradicable. The 'thaw' of 1955–57, which allowed the publication of many more or less heterodox works, and even of some of the *Zhivago* poems (though not of the novel itself), came at a time when Shepilov was the Party Secretary in charge of literature, and later he was blamed for the writers' "excesses" by Khrushchev. It is striking that in one of his unsuccessful appeals to the Central Committee after his fall, he is quoted as identifying himself with the intelligentsia, and claiming its right to think before obeying. A speaker at the Twenty-first Party Congress in February, 1959, said:

> It is impossible to concede that the schismatics and fractionalists of the Anti-Party Group have drawn correct conclusions from the decisions of the Central Committee. For example, Shepilov continues to slander Soviet actuality and the Soviet intelligentsia: he asserts that irresolution is of the essence of the intelligentsia and that he, to be sure, "as a Russian intellectual" also does not escape this irresolution. Such assertions are alien to our party. Such accusations are alien to our Soviet intelligentsia.[9]

This echo of the Enlightenment, however minimal, is encouraging. For if we find it even among professional politicians, we may feel further confidence that Pasternak's faith in its persistence in Russia, and its future renaissance, is not misplaced.

[9] Speech of G. A. Denisov, secretary of the Saratov Provincial Party Committee, to the Twenty-first Congress, *Pravda*, February 6, 1959.

II

HIS LITERARY INTENTIONS

It would be impertinent for a foreigner to attempt a full critical estimate of Pasternak's work, and such is not the intention of this book, which limits itself in principle, if not too narrowly, to what is necessary and sufficient to an understanding of the later controversies. I have for many years regarded Pasternak as perhaps the finest living poet in any language, and it will be seen that a very high view of his writing has been and is held by almost everyone qualified to express an opinion. But many general conclusions emerge from a study of his life and creation; and if some of the arguments presented here are in a way of a literary nature, they are not so in the sense of analytic judgment.

Pasternak's technical views on the nature of literature, and of what he himself was trying to do in his writing, are another matter, being of the greatest importance, and it is to be expected that they will have great influence too, when widely understood. Yet more important still may be his demonstration of power in the more basic area where the categories of literature and life, of art and morality, overlap and merge.

It is very noticeable that the critics who had qualms about *Doctor Zhivago* were almost entirely ones who tried to fit it into certain preconceived categories. The logical fallacy is plain enough.

The main "faults"[1] (i.e., departures from received practice) to have been alleged in this way are interestingly dealt with by Pasternak himself, in a passage in which he strikingly develops his general view of art. Most hostile criticism of *Doctor Zhivago* spoke of insufficient characterization and of the use of improbable coincidence. This was sometimes put in such a way as to imply that Pasternak had been trying to write a conventional novel, but had failed through some lack of skill.

His own comment is decisive (his own English):

For this characterisation of reality of the being, as a substratum, as a common background, the nineteenth century applied the incontestable doctrine of causality, the belief that the objectivity was determined and ruled by an iron chain of causes and effects, that all appearances of the moral and material world were subordinate to the law of sequels and retributions. And the severer the author in showing such consequences (of characters and conducts) the greater a realist he was esteemed. The tragic bewitching spell of Flaubert's style or Maupassant's manner roots in the fact that their narratives are irrevocable like verdicts or sentences, beyond recall.

I also from my earliest years have been struck by the observation that existence was more original, extraordinary, and inexplicable than any of its separate astonishing incidents and facts . . . for the purpose of evoking the same sensations through art's expressive attempts I come to results if not diametrically opposed to the tendencies of the named masterpieces, so at least to quite different observations than those of our predecessors and teachers.

If I had to represent a broad, a large picture of living reality, I would not hope to heighten its sense of *extant objectivity* by

[1] A minor source of misunderstanding about the novel is that we have all received our most powerful impressions of the Russian character from the strong and lucid pens of the novelists. For this has the single disadvantage that actions and personalities of the utmost naturalness in the Russian context may appear not as real, but as bookish scenes. Thus Mr. Philip Toynbee complains that Lara in *Doctor Zhivago* is nothing more than a blend of two earlier feminine characters in Russian literature. The more natural, and truer, conclusion would be that all the three writers concerned were observing real Russian women, and that these may have something, though not everything, in common!

accentuating the fixed statics of 'αναγκη; of natural laws, of settled moral regularity.

. . . There is an effort in the novel to represent the whole sequence of facts and beings and happenings like some moving entireness, like a developing, passing by, rolling and rushing inspiration, as if reality itself had freedom and choice and was composing itself out of numberless variants and versions.

Hence the not sufficient tracing of characters I was reproached with (more than to delineate them I tried to efface them); hence the frank arbitrariness of the "coincidences" (through this means I wanted to show the liberty of being, its verisimilitude touching, adjoining improbability).[2]

If this is the essential of his view of art, it is also, far more than the mysticism and "God-seeking" in terms of which it is sometimes expressed, the essential of his view of life. When he speaks of religion, basically he means a development of this feeling, rather than the interpretations by which, as we saw, he tentatively tried to capture and fix it.

To say that Pasternak seems to consider art as a technique of producing such individual affective results and, in the case of the greatest art, of generalizing them until they seem to transfer the inexplicable glow to life in general, does not, of course, mean that he has a hit-or-miss attitude to artistic method. On the contrary, the passage just quoted shows his extremely conscious attention to the way in which low characterization and high coincidence are utilized in *Doctor Zhivago*. In his poetry, too, the formal, structural aspect receives the utmost stress. He commonly observes his own dictum that rhyme is "the entrance ticket" to poetry. Enjambment, even, is rare. And above all, with all the novelty, complexity and allusiveness of some of his poetry, it is almost never ambiguous; it very seldom allows several possible interpretations.

Yet if he does not fall into the traps which await the striver after novelty at all costs, and which have produced so many casualties among the poems of the post-symbolist period

[2] Letter to Stephen Spender, *Encounter*, August, 1960.

throughout the world, neither does he fall into the traditionalist error of cliché. His language is never 'poetical': it has been well characterized as "impassioned chat." This is one point in which he is, on the whole, ill served in translation—and, it seems, in his own English, on occasion. This is a natural enough difficulty in translation, and in using a language to which one is not native. The differences between, let us say, "enchanted," "bewitched," and "spellbound" from this point of view could only be adequately grasped, let alone explained, by a limited number even of native English speakers.

These would be those equipped to appreciate their own language's poetry. And applying such criteria to the poetry of another language, we can see in what a difficult position an English writer is when it comes to making any real assessment of Pasternak's poetry. We can perhaps say that at the level of rhythm and sound at least we are not in such trouble as with French. Yet even here, the traditions of Russian are different from ours in certain ways. George Reavey says, for instance, "the richest letter in Russian is *p*, just as s is the richest in English." And Henry Lanz tells us that, "In Russian poetry assonance is more easily perceived than in English." The same author makes a careful comparison between the departures from strict iambics in the first thirty-two lines of *Paradise Lost* and *Boris Godunov* respectively—showing far greater eccentricity on Milton's part than on Pushkin's, though the latter was, comparatively speaking, a rhythmic innovator.[3] Nor is metric a question to be taken for granted, or regarded as minor, as is too often done by those concerned not with poetry as such so much as with its supposedly detachable content. Even poets concerned principally with fresh expression have not failed to consider rhythm vigilantly, as Andrey Bely does in his *Symbolism*. Much, therefore, is lost when we consider Pasternak's poetry. That much is left is a measure of his quality.

[3] Henry Lanz, *The Physical Basis of Rime*, Oxford, 1931.

Pasternak wrote on poetry in August, 1958 (in English, in the letter to Eugene Kayden cited above):

Each art, especially that of poetry, means a great deal more than it comprises. Its essence and values are symbolic. This does in no manner signify that we possess the key by which we can discover behind every word or condition some other hidden sense—mystical, occult, or providential—as was erroneously believed of the dramatic works of Ibsen, Maeterlinck, or Leonid Andreyev. Nor does it mean that each true, creative poetical text ought to be a parable or an allegory. What I want to say is that besides and above the separate tropes and metaphorical turns of a poem there exists a figurative tendency, a drift in the poetry itself and in art as a whole—and that is its chief significance—to relate the general, summary purport of a composition to broader and more fundamental ideas—in order to reveal the sublimity of life and the unfathomable values of human existence. I am tempted to say that art does not equal itself, does not mean itself alone, but that it means tangibly something beyond itself. In this way we call art symbolic in essence.

Just as a certain face in a certain light, a certain landscape from a certain viewpoint, may make any one of us catch his breath—not with some easily analyzed effect of 'beauty,' but with the feeling that the sources of meaning have somehow been touched in us, so (Pasternak seems to say) poetry should arrange its material—and to touch not one, but all, or many, of us.

He does not urge that poetry should be more complex, more indirect, more 'symbolist,' but simply that it should, whatever its method, attain that feeling of further, of universal, significance.

It will be seen that such an approach, by which the essential of art is, as it were, the reproduction of "The light that never was on sea or land," is comprehensive. By not relying on the normal recourses of 'symbolism,' by seeing the successful discovery of the illuminating angle of vision as not depending on any particular technique, it broadens the scope of poetry to in-

clude everything from direct statement, or abstract reflection, to the wildest obliquity. Since no maneuverable criteria for determining how to obtain success in the attempt at illumination have ever been found, this is, as is usual with the pronouncements of powerful writers, totally destructive of criticism as we know it. It is also interesting that he directly demolishes the idea of 'explication,' which has become such a widespread critical industry in the English-speaking countries in recent years. It may not be irrelevant to note that escape from the narrow and confusing corridors of the strictly symbolic has recently been effected in the literature of Britain and, to a large extent, America and France as well, except in one or two criticism factories where the capital sunk into the old equipment is so great that there is a natural reluctance to re-tool.

Not that Pasternak was ever much influenced by critics. He has the real writer's attitude to reputations as manufactured by them. In "Wind," from the sequence *Some Fragments about Blok*, he starts:

> Who will survive and be accepted,
> Who censured and accounted dead,
> Such is the province of our toadies

going on to argue that academics arrogate to themselves the right to say if Pushkin should be honored or not, and that one welcome thing about Blok is that, "No one thrusts him down our throats."

Much more importance has, up to a point rightly, been attached to his relations with other poets, particularly Mayakovsky. But in practice, these relationships are the same as any between poets of different attitudes with the typical generosity of mind to recognize the talent they do not wish to emulate—of all true poets, in fact. Pasternak and Mayakovsky admired each other without sharing each other's views. While Mayakovsky, though too un-Pushkinlike for Lenin, fervently attached himself to the Revolution, and employed an "At the Top of My Voice" technique, Pasternak continued on his non-public way,

even eliminating from his style certain resemblances which he and Mayakovsky had noticed. The two poets were not the closest of friends, and had diverged from each other in the last years of Mayakovsky's life, in the course of the literary-political quarrels of that time. But such breaches are not like those between bureaucrats and self-seekers, and did not affect Pasternak's high, if unsentimental, opinion of the other's poetry. When Mayakovsky, after his death, was selected by Stalin to be the true poet of the epoch and thousands of politicians without any genuine affection for poetry started to insist on him uncritically, Pasternak describes the position as: "Mayakovsky was beginning to be propagated compulsorily, like potatoes in the reign of Catherine the Great. That was his second death. For that he is not responsible" (*I Remember*). This was referred to by Soviet commentators, in typical phraseology, as—"sacrilegious"!

As late as January, 1960, Pasternak told Mrs. Olga Carlisle:

> I am weary of this notion of faithfulness to a point of view at all cost. Life around us is ever changing and I believe that one should try to change one's slant accordingly—at least once every ten years. The great heroic devotion to one point of view is very alien to me—it's a lack of humility. Mayakovsky killed himself because his pride would not be reconciled with something new happening within himself—or around him.

Yet the solidarity of sincerity and of art between Pasternak and Mayakovsky was deeper, in spite of all their differences, than the superficial ideological solidarity between Mayakovsky and the politicians. Mayakovsky's death affected Pasternak more sincerely than it did the political authorities. For some time these took the line that Mayakovsky's suicide was due solely to an unhappy love affair. But it was later conceded that it was due to "a complicated conjunction of personal and public circumstances (persecution of the poet by certain officials of RAPP, tragic love)."[4]

[4] *Small Soviet Encyclopaedia*, vol. V, 1959.

Pasternak, on the other hand, has consistently referred to the tragedy in moving terms. The scene after Mayakovsky's death is one of the emotional cruxes of his autobiographical *Safe Conduct*, and was later to reappear as the climax of *Doctor Zhivago*.

Pasternak's desire to write a novel was perhaps expressed as early as 1917, in the poem "Unsad Garden 27," where he says:

> I shall bid goodbye to verse; my mania,
> I have arranged to meet you in a novel.

He started to write prose fiction almost as soon as verse. *A Twin in a Cloud*, his first published verse, was written in 1913, and it was while he was in the middle of the ebullient lyrical period which produced *Above the Barriers*, that he composed his first novella, *Il Tratto di Apelle*, in 1915. Other works followed—*The Childhood of Luvers*, written in 1918 (which was, Pasternak tells us in *I Remember*, the revised beginning of a whole novel of which the draft manuscript had been lost); *Letters from Tula*, also 1918; *Aerial Ways*, written in 1924. These four were published in one volume in 1925, under the title *Aerial Ways*. *Safe Conduct*, his first autobiography, appeared in 1931: it is of such an imaginative, selective and unformalized type that it fits naturally into his fiction, itself highly dependent on his real experience. "A second edition of this book was being prepared, but it was banned."[5] Konstantin Fedin wrote in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in 1936: "Pasternak, the poet, is also working in the domain of prose. We prose writers are as proud of him as a prosaist, as you poets are proud of him as a poet." But *A Tale* (which has appeared in English under the title *The Last Summer*), published in 1934, was the last book of Pasternak's imaginative prose to appear in the USSR, though "Two Excerpts from a Chapter of a Novel: *A District Behind the Front*" came out in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of December 15, 1938.

[5] Letter from Pasternak to George Reavey, March, 1933.

There are two things to be said about Pasternak's fiction prior to *Doctor Zhivago*. First, although it was much admired, it was universally regarded as something of a sideline, the secondary art of a man known as a leading poet. And it is 'poet's prose,' in the sense of being, it might be said, *too* evocative, too image-charged (not that this is typical of the prose of poets, which is often, as with Pushkin's, extremely clear and objective). Pasternak himself seems to have felt this, and consciously cut and clarified his style, as well as seeking greater 'realism,' as he worked toward the triumph of *Doctor Zhivago*.

The other point about this earlier prose is that, retrospectively, large parts of it seem like trial drafts of sections of *Doctor Zhivago*. I do not mean simply that *Doctor Zhivago* includes whole passages based closely on earlier material. For example, the scenes after Zhivago's death closely parallel those following Mayakovsky's death in *Safe Conduct*. There are many close resemblances between Lara in *Doctor Zhivago*, Zhenya in *The Childhood of Luvers* and Evgenia in "Two Excerpts." An early piece, "Lovelessness," which appeared in the Social Revolutionary *Volya Truda* on November 20, 1918, foreshadows incidents in the novel (and even names later to occur there), and also gives something of Pasternak's later attitude to the Revolution: the devoted revolutionary Kovalevsky is shown as being more out of touch with life than his down-to-earth companion Golstov. *A District Behind the Front* was actually announced in 1938 as a fragment from a novel to be called *The Year 1905*, and much of the detail, besides the apolitical approach, is the same as in the parallel incident in *Doctor Zhivago*. These earlier works now appear like fragmentary, inchoate expressions of the great unified vision of the human condition which was finally attained in *Doctor Zhivago*.

Pasternak himself is quite explicit that it was this large unity that he sought in turning to prose. He wrote to Eugene Kayden (in the letter of August, 1958):

You say I am "first and last a poet, a lyric poet." Is it really so? And should I feel proud of being just that? And do you realize the meaning of my being no more than that, whereas it hurts me to feel that I have not had the ability to express in greater fullness the whole of poetry and life in their complete unity? But what am I without the novel . . . ?

In the meantime, Pasternak had attempted to achieve the scope he was seeking in poetry too. His main work in the late 'twenties went into the four long narrative poems, *The Year 1905*, *Lieutenant Schmidt*, *The Lofty Malady* and *Spectorsky*. The first two are about the 1905 Revolution. They combine the historical and autobiographical in a way which anticipates *Zhivago*. They also mark the poet's closest approach to theme, opinion and method satisfactory to the regime. *The Year 1905*, particularly, is a fine vigorous piece, but, as George Reavey says, Pasternak's allusive, lyrical style is not very suited to narrative verse—perhaps less than it is to prose. *The Lofty Malady*, dealing more generally with the personal and public difficulties of the period following the 1917 Revolutions, contains a description of a speech of Lenin's at the Ninth Congress of Soviets, at which Pasternak was present; he sees the Communist leader as above all a clear-minded "confidant" of history, a natural power.[6] *Spectorsky* is a quasi-autobiographical piece, like so much of Pasternak's work, and has much in common with the prose *A Tale*. None of these four works has been felt by critics to be as successful as his lyrics or his prose. Pasternak seems to have agreed.

In all his later pronouncements, he criticizes his earlier work. His prose he came to regard as "trivial" and mannered; in *I Remember* he claims that he no longer likes the style of his verses written before 1940.

This working from a rich complexity to a rich simplicity, as George Reavey so happily puts it, has led in his last poems to a putting off of the new techniques, the obvious novelties which,

[6] The closest parallel in English is Marvell's attitude to Cromwell in the "Horatian Ode."

in Russia as elsewhere, had for some decades seemed the inevitable accompaniment of a fresh voice, but were now appearing as little more than fashions.

He told Mrs. Carlisle in 1960: "All this writing of the 'twenties has terribly aged." And he developed the point further by saying: "Our success in the 'twenties was partly due to chance. My generation found itself in the focal point of history. Our works were dictated by the times. They lacked universality; now they have aged." Of the theoretical basis of this experimentation he commented:

I have never understood those dreams of a new language, of a completely original form of expression. Because of this dream much of the work of the 'twenties which was stylistic experimentation has ceased to exist. The most extraordinary discoveries are made when the artist is overwhelmed by what he has to say. Then he uses the old language in his urgency and the old language is transformed from within.

In a late letter to Reavey he writes: "the support has been taken out from under that modern trend. . . . This striving, though true and original in its source, was not self-dependent enough to stand up to the trials of the changed years."[7]

Such were the intentions, moral and technical, with which he approached *Doctor Zhivago*. It will be seen that his concerns are deeper, though less insistent, than the Procrustean generalizations of ideology. After the Revolution it was writers like Mayakovsky, ignorant of politics yet addicted to literary extremisms and simplifications, who catastrophically sought in the Party and its theories the crude guidance of myth, just as the Italian Futurists welcomed Fascism. Writers with political training, like the Marxist Zamyatin, were incorrigibly skeptical. But Pasternak felt and thought at a more profound level yet. In him, simplicity is due to generality, not to simplification: he was never tempted to impose finalities on life, only to find in it its natural flow.

[7] *The Poetry of Boris Pasternak*, edited by George Reavey, New York, 1960.

III

TOWARD *Doctor Zhivago*

IN A SENSE IT MAY BE ARGUED that all intellectuals become separated from other sections of society. But it can be shown that in the Soviet Union they at least share the dangers of the population. Without going beyond the poets of that astonishing efflorescence of Russian verse which took place in the second decade of our century, we may look at a bare outline of the pressures which Pasternak and his colleagues endured. August, 1921, the black month for Russian poetry, saw the death of Alexander Blok from anemia aggravated by starvation, and the shooting without trial of N. Gumilev for counter-revolutionary offenses. Yessenin committed suicide in 1925 and Mayakovsky in 1930. Andrey Bely—later to be the most abused of all—died naturally in the early 'thirties. Mandelshtam was arrested shortly afterwards and has not been seen again. Marina Tsvetaeva, whom Pasternak deeply admired both personally and as a poet, had been living abroad. She returned to the Soviet Union in 1939, was arrested in 1940, and committed suicide in prison on her way to a labor camp. The survivors were Anna Akhmatova and Pasternak. Akhmatova had a nervous breakdown after the shooting of Gumilev, formerly her husband, and lived quietly until 1946 when she was expelled from the Union of

Writers for pessimism. She has since been readmitted, after years of penury in menial jobs.[1]

In the early part of the Stalin era, up to the mid-'thirties, a certain comparative freedom of expression was possible in aesthetic matters. A number of speeches were made by Pasternak at that time to meetings of authors, and printed or referred to in the Soviet press. In 1931, he said to the All-Union Association of Proletarian Writers, the predecessor of the present Union of Writers: "They are always shouting at the poets, 'Do this! Do that!' But first of all it is necessary to speak of what the poet himself needs. The times exist for man, not man for the times."

Literaturnaya Gazeta commented on December 19, 1931: "If anyone else had spoken such reactionary words, he would have been shouted down, but the audience applauded Pasternak."

In February, 1936, he spoke to the Plenum of the Union of Writers. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* quotes him as attacking the State-sponsored trend of optimism as "affected bluster . . . an insipidity which has become such a habit with us that it is thought of as obligatory for everyone." He went on:

> They speak of poetry as of some continually functioning machine with an output directly proportional to the work put in. To me it seems like a water pump which, in spite of every effort, still cannot satisfy the general needs. But everyone having repented and promised to increase their efforts, there should plainly be more water. . . . Some speakers here very confidently divided poems into the good and bad, as if the latter were correct or faulty machine parts. . . . Our salvation will not come from increased application. Art is unthinkable without risk and self-sacrifice. Freedom and imaginative daring must be achieved in practice. Here we must expect the unexpected. Do not wait for directives on that road.

[1] Anna Akhmatova's poem "Boris Pasternak" (1940) contains the lines:

> The whole of the earth was his inheritance,
> But he preferred to share it with all men.

He also commented: "Writers must not be given orders," adding, "You cannot say to a mother, 'Bear a girl, not a boy.' There are some dirty hands meddling with art, but I see no love of art." This time his speech was frequently interrupted with angry shouting, to which he retorted: "Don't yell at me. But if you must yell, at least don't do it in unison."[2]

Pressures on the writers had long been powerful. But it is from this time that the expression of dissenting views became impossible. The "period of mass repression," as it is now called, closed in.

In his *Sketch for an Autobiography*, written in 1956, Pasternak says of the suicides of Yessenin, Mayakovsky, Tsvetaeva and Iashvili, the Georgian poet: "All of them have suffered in an indescribable manner, have suffered to a degree when anguish is already a mental illness. Let us bow with compassion as much before their suffering as before their talent and shining memory."

Breaking off his story before the great Terror, he says: "To continue it would be immeasurably difficult. . . . One would have to talk in a manner which would grip the heart and make the hair stand on end."

Pasternak described to an interviewer, Dr. Nilsson, something of how the Terror affected him personally:

"On one occasion they came to me," he said, "with something they wanted me to sign. It was to the effect that I approved of the Party's execution of the generals. In a sense this was a proof of their confidence in me. They didn't go to those who were on the list for liquidation. My wife was pregnant. She cried and begged me to sign, but I couldn't. That day I examined the pros and cons of my own survival. I was convinced that I would be arrested—my turn had now come! I was prepared for it. I abhorred all this blood. I couldn't stand things any longer. But nothing happened. It was, I was told later, my colleagues who saved me indirectly. No one dared to report to the hierarchy that I hadn't signed.

[2] *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, March 15, 1936.

"Actually, the demands of the hierarchy are very slight," said Pasternak slowly. "There is only one thing they really want. You should hate what you like and love what you abhor! But this is the most difficult of all."

I recognized it as a quotation from *Doctor Zhivago*.[3]

His friend Afinogenov, the playwright, had already been expelled from the Writers' Union, and was simply awaiting arrest. Pasternak continued to visit him, a thing that few dared to do in the then horribly common circumstances. Afinogenov writes in his *Diary:* "Everyone has forgotten me, except Boris Pasternak." He goes on to tell of the visits and conversations which strengthened him to face his frightful ordeal: "One's heart is drawn to him because he has a knack of finding wonderful human words of consolation, not out of pity, but from faith in a better life."

The memory of those times was still with Pasternak in his last years. In 1960 he went out of his way to show Mrs. Olga Carlisle "Isaac Babel's house, where he was arrested in the 1930's and to which he never returned."

An admirer of Russian literature has said that Pasternak's survival can be compared only to that of the coelacanth. That he lived through the Stalin epoch both unharmed and uncorrupted is indeed a fantastic anomaly. It is true that he was silenced for many years, except for his great translations. Zhdanov was allowed in 1946 to censure his work publicly as "devoid of ideas and cut off from the life of the people." Yet he was only given a warning and not expelled from the Union of Writers as were Akhmatova and Zoshchenko. Various explanations have been put forward for this moderation. It is said that Stalin much admired some of his translations from the Georgian. Another suggestion, in keeping with the dictator's devious character, is that Stalin kept Pasternak in order to have a genuine writer of genius with whose name he could puncture the conceit of his own hacks, and spur them on to better efforts.

[3] *Daily Mail* (London), October 24, 1958.

That he had respect for Pasternak's talents seems undoubted. It is perhaps too much to imagine of Stalin that he might have seen in Pasternak, with all his repudiation of the primacy of politics and his courageous moral revulsion from certain types of political action, something else, which is relevant also to Pasternak's later relations with Khrushchev. This is a political quietism (such as that often found in the Orthodox churches) which does not deny the rights of even the hostile Caesar. For it, questions of the legitimacy or otherwise of regimes and their leaders hardly arise. To Pasternak the Revolution—for all that the conscious ideas of its proponents are both shallow and unreal—presents itself as a genuine natural force. He may concern himself mainly with preserving the life of the individual, and of art, among its storms; he may describe the destruction it has wrought; he may look forward to better things. But he does not repudiate it, any more than a freezing man repudiates winter.

It is said that Alexander Fadeyev, Stalin's Secretary General of the Union of Writers, did all he could to save Pasternak. Fadeyev was always regarded as a Party die-hard, and if he too showed something of a solidarity transcending Party, it is especially significant of its power. Pasternak wrote as feelingly of Fadeyev's suicide in 1956 as of previous literary suicides.

An abortive attempt was, indeed, made to involve Pasternak in criminal charges. His dearest friend and closest collaborator, Olga Ivinskaya, the model for Lara in *Doctor Zhivago*, was arrested and ordered to confess to charges that she and Pasternak were Western agents. She was, Pasternak later told Dr. Ronald Hingley, Lecturer in Russian at Oxford, actually "tortured."[4] But she held out, and after a year in the Lubyanka prison, was sent to a labor camp—to be released four years later under the amnesty following the death of Stalin. It seems possible that her stubborn heroism saved Pasternak from prison, or perhaps execution. For in the time thus gained the *Zhdanovshchina*

[4] *Sunday Times* (London), January 22, 1961.

petered out, Zhdanov himself died, and his followers were disgraced, leaving as Stalin's chief collaborators a group much less concerned with literary persecutions.

The Khrushchev regime was to deal with her equally unjustly after Pasternak's death, and to allege, moreover, that her attachment to Pasternak was purely mercenary.

Pasternak's poems of the war years treat the war with something of the optimism shown in the Epilogue of *Doctor Zhivago*: all the horror must lead to *something*. A Soviet critic could write: "Having turned to this chapter of history so laden with clatter and iron, Pasternak was able to say some intelligent and poetic, if somewhat belated, things about it. Pasternak's war poems are imbued with love and respect for the Soviet man, the fighter, the victor."[5]

Pasternak expressed a fuller view in his 1958 interview with Dr. Nilsson, cited earlier:

Pasternak saw the war as a liberation, an awakening from an evil dream to reality. He had great hopes of the results of the war.

"A war," he said, "is no game of chess, it doesn't merely end in the victory of white over black. Other things must come out of it. So many sacrifices cannot result in nothing.

"I believe that since the war Russia has entered a period of integration. Something new comes forth, a new view of life, a sense among humanity of its own value."

Is he still optimistic, even though he is not permitted publication of his novel? Yes, he is.

"Isolated official measures are of no importance," he stressed. "The new Russia is something which will come forth in any case, in defiance of all administrative interference. Something grows among the people, organically.

"On the whole, in our age, people are having a new attitude towards life. During the nineteenth century it was the bourgeoisie which ruled. Mankind sought security in money, land, and things. Today, mankind has realised that there is no security in property.

[5] *Znamya*, No. 8–9, 1946.

"This applies not only to Russians. In this era of world wars, in this atomic age, the values of things change in the human conception. We have learnt that we are the guests of existence, travellers between two stations. We must discover security within ourselves."

The chess comparison is curiously parallel to an expression of the same feeling in the Polish anti-Stalinist poet Wazyk's "Poem for Adults":

> We make demands on this earth,
> for which we did not throw dice,
> for which a million perished in battle.

It was in this common postwar mood that Pasternak felt the urge to create a great prose work, expressing all his life and experience. Gerd Ruge describes a conversation with him:

After the war he found that he had a name, and it was a name that was also known abroad. Suddenly he sprang from his chair and stood upright, tall, with his narrow, deeply-cut face, his arms hanging straight down.

"So then I said to myself, you must stand up straight before your own name. It seemed to me that I first had to earn the name I had won, not by poetry, but by prose, by something that might well cost more labour, more effort, more time, and whatever else."

He was more than sixty, Pasternak said, an old man who had lived through anxious and stirring times. He had the duty to bear witness—the witness of an artist, not a politician. A work of art could not be all on one plane; it had to speak on different levels. In a novel, and in his novel too, the figures of truth and falsehood must have their say.[6]

He gave a similar account of his motives in writing *Doctor Zhivago* to Dr. Ronald Hingley:

Pasternak explained his aims in writing *Doctor Zhivago*. After the war he began to feel dissatisfied with the poetry on which his reputation in Russia and abroad largely rested. It

[6] This and following quotations are from Ruge's article in *Encounter*, March, 1958.

now seemed to him too fragmentary, too personal and too inaccessible. "I began to feel ashamed of my own reputation and decided I must justify it." Where his earlier writing had been complex and on a minor scale, the new work was to be "big and simple."

He feels that human life in our century has become fuller in experience and more significant than ever before. But literature has failed for the most part to meet this challenge, and has retreated into the personal and the parochial. This has been said before—usually by people who have not been able to do anything about it. Pasternak has shown what he can contribute towards restoring the balance by writing *Doctor Zhivago*.

He himself feels that the novel has defects—he volunteered criticisms of its comparatively weak beginning and the thinness of some of the characterisations. But he is in no doubt at all that he has been fundamentally successful in achieving his main aim.[7]

In spite of this feeling that the breadth he sought could only be attained in prose, the verses he attached to *Doctor Zhivago* were not just incidental, any more than the novel was simply symbolic. He told Mrs. Olga Carlisle:

> The plan of the novel is outlined by the poems accompanying it. This is partly why I chose to publish them alongside the novel. They are there also to give the novel more body, more richness. For the same reason I used religious symbolism —to give warmth to the book. Now some critics have gotten so wrapped up in those symbols—which are put in the book the way stoves go into a house, to warm it up—they would like me to commit myself and climb into the stove. . . .

A remark of Pasternak's to Ruge would convey a good deal of what he was seeking to do in *Doctor Zhivago*, if it were possible to discuss so intensely Russian a book in terms of another literature: "The powers of Thomas Mann and Rilke combined in one person—that would produce a work of art."

As many critics have pointed out, *Doctor Zhivago* is not, in the ordinary political sense, anti-Communist. The Soviet State

[7] *Sunday Times* (London), October 26, 1958.

is indeed treated coldly. But no alternative is offered. There is no sort of implication of praise for a counter-revolution, still less for any intervention from the West. And if the Soviet regime is represented as a corrupting external pressure on the life of the individual, so is the old regime—in fact even more so.

Nor is Pasternak's political quietism the product of any long-term pessimism about the fate of Russia. It is the product not of a cyclic, but of a tragic view of life; and Ruge describes him as sanguine about the future:

The time of revolution is past, he says. "The proclamations, the tumult, the excitement, are over. Now something else is growing, something new. It is growing imperceptibly and quietly, as the grass grows. It is growing as fruit does, and it is growing in the young. The essential thing in this epoch is that a new freedom is being born." These words echo the last sentence of his novel, the hopeful, optimistic words exchanged between the two friends of the dead Doctor Zhivago.

It is also relevant to quote Ruge on Pasternak's view of the Russian attitude to society:

This tremendously vital and optimistic poet refuses, because of his profound faith in the life force, to take a position of hostility towards the world around him. This is evident, too, in his answer to the question as to what he meant when he said that the Russian Revolution was over and had attained its goal. He said: "Let me give a poetic answer. But do not think that it is mere confused mumbling. My Russian friends here can contradict me if they think so. What I want to say to you is this: Russians have a different attitude to property and possessions. Russians regard themselves as being mere guests in this life. I suppose the truth is that we Russians are more philosophical than the West."

It is this perspective which makes comprehensible such incidents as one Ruge reports:

Then he stood up again, to call for a new toast, a patriotic toast, remarking as a preliminary that he wanted to talk about

the work of literary education now being done in the Soviet Union. It was an important work. He himself had been an esoteric poet lost in fantasies and impressions, and he was grateful for this literary education. "I have not become a socialist realist," he said. "No, I'm no socialist realist. But I have become a realist, and for that I am grateful."

Pasternak's work is thus seen to be not so much anti-Communist as anti-political. It is true that his characters make certain flat and powerful statements of a political nature, as when Dudorov speaks of collectivization as not merely an error but a failure. But these passages might, as Pasternak himself says, have been removed without much affecting the book. It is also true that he gives a strong impression of the unpleasant experiences of the Russian people during the great purges. But this is not more—indeed it is a good deal less—than Khrushchev himself has said. If we compare *Doctor Zhivago* with Dudintsev's *Not by Bread Alone* we may make a true distinction. Dudintsev's work is highly critical of a great deal about Soviet life. And yet it was published in 1956 by the very *Novy Mir* which rejected *Doctor Zhivago*, even though it has since been subjected to many attacks. Dudintsev's criticisms of society remain within the political range. Whatever he is attacking, he implies that it can be corrected by certain changes of policy on the part of the ruling party. Pasternak's attitude is different: he sees politics, even revolutionary politics, simply as one, and not the most important, of the many forces at work in life, and he strongly implies that politicians delude themselves when they seek to change life in any basic sense. "Politics don't appeal to me. I don't like people who don't care about the truth" is far more deadly than hostility to any particular program.

Thus the literary struggles in the Soviet Union in 1956–57 hardly affected Pasternak. Margarita Aliger and Vladimir Dudintsev and a whole list of poets, novelists and dramatists were subjected to long polemics by the organs of the Party both for works they had published in the then *Thaw*, and for their gen-

eral attitudes to the relaxation of control in literature. The campaign was protracted. Senior Communist writers like Ehrenburg and Simonov were drawn in and subjected to moderate censure. The branches of the Writers' Union were attacked for failing, at their meetings, to take a strong line hostile to the deviant works and ideas. Khrushchev personally assembled the writers and threatened them, in May, 1957. And at least some of them bowed to discipline. For though the rebels put forward a freer interpretation of the mutual rights and duties of the Party and the writer, yet the discussion remained within the bounds of Soviet theory. Most of the writers were actually Party members.

It is true that even members of the Party can in certain circumstances be treated as enemies. Nagy was a member of the same Party as Kadar right up till the day in November when the guns opened up. But still, within the sphere of those admitting the principles of Marxism-Leninism, the supremacy of politics, the transcendental importance of the Soviet State and the authority of the Communist Party, the political leadership feels able to operate at least partly by persuasion. Both its arguments and the weight of its authority evidently meant something to the *Thaw* writers, even while they were being denounced for a "bourgeois-anarchist, individualistic conception of the creative liberty of the artist, directed against the Party supervision of art."[8]

With Pasternak, the case was different. Here was a mature mind of immense subtlety and strength, which had long since looked at both the claims and the ideas of the Party and been completely unimpressed. He did not even enter into the argument. He simply passed it by, as of little interest or importance.

It seems specially relevant that comment from India has shown greater sensitivity and interest in the case than, perhaps, that from anywhere else in the world. A number of leading Indian writers greeted *Doctor Zhivago* perceptively and enthu-

[8] *Questions of Philosophy*, September, 1957.

siastically. Later, groups of writers throughout the country, including those of the then Communist-governed state of Kerala, protested strongly about the conduct of the Soviet authorities in the matter of the Nobel Prize. This is much the same as what their colleagues have done throughout the world. But there is something special in what the Indians note in Pasternak. They see, particularly, not active hostility to the political rulers of the Soviet Union, but simply an affirmation of the individual, of his duty to his conscience and of his right, though not to resist, yet to avoid co-operation with authority. In this they sense an affinity with their own traditions and in particular with Gandhi and his movement.

On the other hand, the nonpolitical nature of Pasternak's book was held against him by the Spanish Falangist journalist Suevos, who accused him of not wishing to serve the anti-Communist cause, saying: "Pasternak has preferred a scandal. A scandal useless to the Russian people who remain on the margin without experiencing as a result of it any improvement in their situation."[9]

Suevos goes on to claim that the Swedish Academy, in awarding the Nobel Prize, was indeed guided by political considerations hostile to Communism, but that these were due to "international freemasonry." They therefore ignored those Russian writers who had suffered from the Communists more than Pasternak has and were thus more worthy of the prize. (Suevos, a former Director-General of the Spanish Radio, is known for his extreme anti-democratic views, and the comments of Spanish literary critics unaddicted to political arguments have been as favorable to Pasternak as those of the rest of the world.)

Pasternak's expression of regret that *Doctor Zhivago* led to a political campaign in the West has been taken by a few Western commentators as purely the result of pressure and not representing Pasternak's sincere view. There is no doubt about the pressure. Yet Pasternak's attitude has been consistent, and the

[9] *Arriba*, November 2, 1958.

fact that the controversy about *Doctor Zhivago* inevitably developed political overtones must have been unwelcome to him. It is true that he has given his view that there would have been no trouble if the Soviet authorities had published *Doctor Zhivago*. And it is equally true that he seems to have regarded its publication in the West, if it could not be published in Russia, as something the prevention of which would be incompatible with his duty as an artist, in comparison with which political considerations are of little significance. But this is not the same as to welcome a quasi-political furore.

After the book had been completed, he felt that he had, in the main, succeeded in doing what he intended—a public, though a nonpolitical, service. "I have a feeling," he wrote in a letter some time ago,

> that a completely new era is beginning, with new tasks and new demands on the heart and on human dignity, a silent age which will never be proclaimed and allowed voice but will grow more real every day without our noticing it. That is why *Doctor Zhivago* is the most important piece of work I have been able to do so far in the whole of my life.[10]

Pasternak emphasized both the nonpolitical nature of his views and the fact that he still held them, in the conversation with Ruge recorded in *Encounter*:

> "I deplore the fuss now being made about my book," he said. "Everybody's writing about it, but who in fact has read it? What do they quote from it? Always the same passages—three pages, perhaps, out of a book of 700 pages. . . ."
>
> He does not disavow anything he has written; he does not want to delete a single sentence; but he does object to the book's being treated as a political pamphlet, as an indictment of Soviet society. Not long ago, he said, some Communist journalists had called on him; they spoke only of the sensation the book had caused, not of the book itself. When Boris Pasternak says that his book is not the work of a political man, he speaks in all sincerity.

[10] *Manchester Guardian*, November 6, 1958.

On the essential point Pasternak told Ruge: "You have the right to ask me whether I believe what I have written. My answer is yes. I have borne witness as an artist; I have written about the times I lived through."[11]

[11] *New York Times*, International Edition, October 25, 1958.

IV

OPINIONS OF *Doctor Zhivago*

IN EVERY NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRY leading critics of undoubted integrity—or at least of integrity upon which doubt has never been cast in other connections—have given the novel not just praise, but the very highest praise. It has certainly been greeted with a critical enthusiasm on a scale greater than in the case of any work in recent years. The writings of previous Nobel Prize winners, however applauded, have seldom been rated so highly.

This scarcely needs demonstrating, as it will be within every reader's experience. Yet among the enthusiastic opinions expressed we may mention particularly those of Sir Maurice Bowra, Edmund Wilson, Alberto Moravia, Albert Camus, François Mauriac and Ignazio Silone.

Camus, who had the prize the previous year, said: "It is the best choice that could have been made." Alberto Moravia, himself one of the strongest candidates for the 1958 award, wrote: "Pasternak is the greatest living Russian poet." François Mauriac, another Nobel Prize winner and a writer often sympathetically treated by Communist commentators, said: "*Doctor Zhivago* is perhaps the most important novel of our age." (On the political biases of the last two, Ilya Ehrenburg had already pointed out to the Soviet public: "However Mauriac and Moravia regard Communism, as writers they do not

praise the capitalist world."[1] Most other opinions were similar. In fact, as a Yugoslav commentator wrote after the award of the Nobel Prize: "Like every great literary work, the novel had something to say to every individual reader. Nevertheless, the critics more or less agree in their assessments." (*Nasi Razgledi*, November 1, 1958.)

Reviewers in the Western world were not, of course, unanimous. But favorable opinion comes from so many and such weighty sources that a powerful argument would be required to refute it. The Soviet quasi-official argument, as given in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* and elsewhere, is that these views are simply the result of a 'cold war' plot. Without taking this literally we may consider whether political bias, conscious or unconscious, could have contributed to the book's reputation.

It is plain that it has done so in certain cases, but these are usually commentators with a great interest in politics and very little in literature. With such we are not concerned. And there are many points which appear to refute the Soviet opinion as applied to writers and critics of undoubted status and men of good will in general. The Soviet case involves the assertion that the book is weak and poor to the extent that no one could take it for a masterpiece unless motivated by political feelings of an anti-Soviet nature. For a truly crucial test of this Soviet view it may be best not to rely mainly on the statements of prominent non-Communists. Even though the power and extent of the feelings shown by these might cast some doubt on the Soviet view, it seems more decisive to examine the statements of Communists and near-Communists.

Nikolay Mikhailov, then Soviet Minister of Culture, is reported in an interview as speaking with some moderation on first hearing of the Nobel award. He said he was "surprised over the choice. I know Pasternak is a true poet and an excellent translator, but why should he get the prize now, many years

[1] *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, February 9, 1957.

after his best poems were published?"[2] In spite of the implicit, and almost urbane, thrust against *Doctor Zhivago*, this remark at least seems to concede that Pasternak might well have deserved a Nobel Prize for his poetry. (And if the supposed belatedness of such an award is more than a debating point, it may be noted that Sholokhov, who was to be put forward as Russia's alternative—and superior—candidate, had published no complete work, as apart from short excerpts such as those given in *Pravda* of December 31, 1956–January 1, 1957, since 1943.)

A Communist, writing in an official Party organ (*Unità*, October 24, 1958), put the matter as follows:

His [Pasternak's] stature is certainly one for the Nobel Prize. It remains debatable whether, if a prize was to be granted to a Soviet writer at all, the choice should not have fallen on another great writer, Sholokhov, who with his *And Quiet Flows the Don* puts himself equally in the first ranks of world literature. In the same way it was last year a matter of discussion whether the prize should have gone to Camus rather than to Sartre, among the French writers who over the last fifteen years have become the major interpreters of the epoch. Thus, in such cases one can talk of a dubious choice and of a choice intentionally political. However, Pasternak's status cannot be denied when set against the array of writers who have of late received the Nobel.

Defined in this way the allegation of political bias becomes a very slight one. Of two men, said to be equally qualified, it is implied that the Swedish selectors inclined to the one who fitted their political prejudices. But this is almost to say that the political element need have been little more than a feather added to one of the scales.

The *Unità* article (by Michele Rago) was published after the announcement of the Nobel award but before Pasternak's refusal of the prize. It also says:

. . . We face a work which is outside time, a work to which one could not deny the beauty and lyrical force of its many

[2] *Daily Telegraph* (London), October 24, 1958.

pages; but the ideological framework of which has become an interpretative obstacle, not only with regard to this or that character, whether positive or negative, not only with regard to this or that elemental "injustice" stemming from the Revolution, but to the very social values which are recognized and accepted universally—and not only in the USSR: history, the consequence of history, man in his progress.

Another Italian Communist reviewer (Carlo Solinari, in *Il Contemporaneo*) wrote: "While Sholokhov is a better interpreter of Soviet views on an historical plane, Pasternak is the better on an artistic plane."

Yet another (Dr. Toti, in *Il Lavoro*, organ of the CGIL) spoke of *Doctor Zhivago* as "a masterpiece of world literature," adding that it was an honor that it was first published in Italy.

A member of the Central Committee of the British Communist Party, Dr. Arnold Kettle, wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* on November 5, 1958: "What I . . . may think about the objective content and artistic merit [of *Doctor Zhivago*] has become for the moment irrelevant." He argues that "in the circumstances of today" political considerations should be decisive. (*Politically*, he expresses himself in a very hostile fashion toward Pasternak, accusing him of ignoring Soviet "facts" which, one might have thought, a Moscow writer was better qualified to speak of than an English intellectual.)

Another English Communist, Ivor Montagu, while also attacking the book on political grounds, said:

I am anxious not to denigrate Pasternak, his sense of beauty, his sensitivity to mood, his power to express both. I am sure his book is written in sincerity, with no desire to harm, just as, according to report, its manuscript was handed in good faith to a reputable Western publisher before there was any question of its non-publication in the USSR.

On the Soviet refusal to publish, he commented:

A recent report runs that a Soviet Writers' Union official, explaining its non-publication in the USSR, said: "It is against our Soviet morality." Many people may feel, though they find

this saying and my appraisal of the novel just, that these provide no adequate reasons for its Soviet non-publication. That society is stronger which can afford to allow ideas to be settled by discussion not suppression. The exercise of censorship for necessary security can degenerate into an unnecessary tyranny of cliques.[3]

Ilya Ehrenburg, the well-known Soviet writer, gave the following view, in an interview with the German journalist Gerd Ruge, after the publication of *Doctor Zhivago*, but before the Nobel award:

"Boris Pasternak is a great writer. . . . He is one of the greatest living poets in the world. Even his prose is always poetic, always not quite on the ground, but it is always great prose, full of poetic images. I have read *Doctor Zhivago*, and the description of those days is excellent. Pasternak and I belong to the same generation, so I can pass judgment on this."

Seeing my surprise at this wholly positive appraisal, Ehrenburg recapitulated what he had said—but added: "As I said, I have read the novel, in manuscript. To be sure, I have not yet finished it, I have just got to the period of the revolution. Up to that time, I repeat, the description is excellent."[4]

A critic in an Indian Communist Party organ (Mohit Sen in *New Age*, November 23, 1958) attacked *Doctor Zhivago* as "essentially a philippic against socialism" but he also said: "the book is written by a poet of great subtlety and sensuous mysticism. There are magnificent descriptions of nature." Quoting the poems and the passages on nature he said: "If *Doctor Zhivago* was only this one could perhaps have understood the Nobel Prize."

Such comments, agreeing with the Soviet commentators only on the political side, and conceding the artistic merits of Pasternak's work, put a different complexion on the affair.

[3] *World News*, October 4, 1958. It is only fair to add that Montagu returned to the Party line in the Moscow organ *Problems of Peace and Socialism* (No. 4, December, 1958), where his article, "A Lot of Fuss over Zhivago," repeats Soviet arguments with some faithfulness.

[4] *Encounter*, October, 1958.

A Yugoslav commentator condemned the polemics which "the Soviet Writers' Union was the first to start," because they cannot evade "the real value of Pasternak's work." Pasternak, who has "long enjoyed the reputation of one of the best contemporary poets," has written a novel of which "a number of critics point out it is impossible to connect with politics in the ordinary sense of the word." The writer adds that "all the characteristics of the great Russian literary works are also detectable in Pasternak's novel." (*Nasi Razgledi*, November 1, 1958.)

Another Yugoslav critic, though more inclined to praise Sholokhov, said: "It would be hard to allege that Pasternak did not deserve the prize." (*Slovensky Porocevalec*, October 28, 1958.)

During the difficult period of 1957–58, Pasternak told a reporter: "Only the Polish poets remembered me. They asked our writers to ask me to translate Juliusz Slowacki's *Maria Stuart* because they wanted me to have work." The July-September, 1957, number of the Polish quarterly *Opinie*, devoted to Polish-Soviet friendship, published 35 pages of excerpts from *Doctor Zhivago*—its first prose publication. This was introduced by a brief note saying that the novel would soon be issued by a Soviet publishing house and calling it "a broad intricate story about the fate of the Russian intelligentsia and their ideological transformation, which was frequently accompanied by tragic conflicts." The Soviet *Literaturnaya Gazeta* on September 28, 1957, attacked *Opinie* for its selection of Soviet writers—but Pasternak, unlike others, was not named. (*Opinie* was defended by the Polish weekly *Polityka*, but no further numbers came out.)

Polish publication of matter favorable to Pasternak continued in a cautious way even after *Doctor Zhivago* was brought out in the West.

Some translations of Pasternak's poems appeared, with photographs of their author but without comment, on the front page of the Polish weekly *Nowa Kultura* of February 9, 1958. The

Union of Polish Writers sent a telegram of congratulations to Pasternak on the Nobel award on October 25, 1958, the only group in the Soviet bloc to do so. Warsaw Radio on October 24, 1958, announced the award and followed it by reading from a translated excerpt of Pasternak's poem "Chopin." Most of the Polish official press waited for the Soviet reaction before actually commenting on the award, and then preserved a fairly neutral attitude. One Communist paper, the Party's organ in Silesia, was too quick and printed a photograph of Pasternak, a translation of one of his poems and the following comment:

> Boris Pasternak is a magnificent poet, a great epic writer, a translator of Shakespeare's tragedies and Goethe's *Faust*. Boris Pasternak has been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for 1958, which is undoubtedly an expression of praise of the whole world for the great creative power of the Soviet writer.[5]

As in the case of Ivor Montagu, Communists have sometimes shifted their opinions. We may perhaps take it that the earlier is the more spontaneous.

Pablo Neruda, the Chilean Communist poet and politician, who is often thought of as the best of the world's present-day Communist writers, first said that he was "happy that the Nobel Prize has fallen to a Soviet writer, thus ending international discrimination, because Pasternak is one of the greatest contributors to universal literature."[6] He later qualified this by calling *Doctor Zhivago* "a bad novel" which had "bored me immensely."[7]

The extent to which Communists all over the world fall in with and reproduce the arguments of the Soviet authorities on all matters is very remarkable. But we see that, in the case of *Doctor Zhivago*, a number of them in India, in Italy, in England and elsewhere departed to a considerable extent from the usual

[5] *Trybuna Robotnicza*, October 25–26, 1958.
[6] *Ceylon Daily News*, October 27, 1958.
[7] New China News Agency, November, 1958, quoting an interview with a Cuban newspaperman, A. C. Aquero.

habit. A natural conclusion would be that there were particularly powerful influences countervailing the normal requirements of allegiance. These can only have been, on the issue of Pasternak's talent and the book's quality, a very strong conviction that a work of genius was involved; and on the Soviet reaction, a strong notion that an error had been made in Moscow. The Communist opinions given above certainly disprove the Soviet thesis that no one, unless motivated by counter-revolutionary views, could believe Pasternak or his book merited the Nobel Prize. But what is really striking is not simply that Communists had qualms about a Soviet view, but that these qualms were so strong that it was felt necessary to express them publicly. For this is an extremely rare occurrence. And while we see that certain Communists were unable to suppress their feelings in the interests of the political struggle, we may feel that there were many others whose true opinions of the matter were the same but whose sense of discipline was sufficiently strong to prevent their putting this on record. Indeed, this is confirmed to some extent by the changes of opinion already noted on the part of certain Communists *after* the Russians had, in effect, made the issue a matter of confidence.

As for the official views, they are given at length at the end of this book. But it may be worth quoting one or two revealing examples of the more disciplined type of Communist comment outside the USSR.

The editor of the Rumanian *Gazeta Literara* (October 30, 1958) takes the line that Pasternak was published abroad simply because this is done with *any* "anti-Soviet rubbish." He adds:

All fugitives capable of holding pencils in their hands have become "writers" overnight once across the frontiers of the Soviet Union and their rubbish has been decreed—for a week or for a month—literature. It is only five years since a fugitive, breaking the penal code, became overnight Kravchenko, author of the novel *I Chose Freedom*. . . . Who still remembers Kravchenko?

The answer to the last question seems to be that the author of the article does, but aside from the dubious nature of the theory advanced it is perhaps worth pointing out that Kravchenko's book was not a novel at all and that as far as is known no literary merits, as apart from its value or otherwise as a political document, have ever been advanced for it.

A significant comment appeared in Hungary (*Kisalfold*, No. 256, October 30, 1958). This took the Soviet line, though not in its most violent form, and ended:

> Hungarian readers first read Pasternak's name in Gyula Illyes's journey-notes entitled "Russia" and written in the middle of the '30's. . . . What Illyes liked best about Pasternak was that allegedly he had never gone as far as writing down the word "Soviets." It was Illyes who translated the first Pasternak poem into Hungarian. Finally in autumn, 1956, it was Illyes once more who introduced his old acquaintance.

The reference to Illyes and to the autumn of 1956 is striking. For the Hungarian writer was one of the strongest opponents of the Rákosi regime, of which his long poem "One Sentence on Tyranny," published in the Budapest *Irodalmi Ujsag* of November 2, 1956, is a most moving and effective indictment; he was a firm supporter of the Nagy government; and he has since been publicly accused of hostility to the people and to socialism.

The French edition of *Doctor Zhivago* appeared at the end of June, 1958. The first Communist attack came from Elsa Triolet, the Russian-born writer, who is also the wife of Louis Aragon, poet and author and member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party. Writing of it in the Communist literary weekly *Les Lettres Françaises* of July 3, 1958, she said: "I have not read the novel in Russian and I am not going to bother myself to read it in French." She added: "From what I have heard it seems that the publication will be harmful to the author and not to his country."

It may also be relevant to the 'cold war' theory that the

minority in the West who voiced criticism adverse to *Doctor Zhivago* includes writers who have expressed themselves with great hostility to the Soviet system. They number such critics and correspondents as Mr. Joel Carmichael (in *Encounter*) and Mr. Philip Toynbee (in *London Magazine*). At least it seems that political bias is not always effective, or that the American provocateurs failed to employ all their available agents.

It is not my purpose here to enter into the aesthetic controversy. But it may be noted that almost all hostile criticism in the West (as indeed is true also of the few sentences of literary, as opposed to political, denunciation which have appeared in the Soviet Union) finds the major faults of the work to be an absence of characterization and lack of a rigorous structure. These are, of course, the qualities usually aimed at by writers in the tradition of the modern psychological novel. But to assert that a work of fiction cannot be of major value without them would be to deny a good deal of great literature from *Don Quixote* on, and seems to resemble the methods by which French eighteenth-century critics proved that Shakespeare's were not plays. Rather than get stuck in an argument about the definition of "novel," it should be possible to agree with a dissident Italian Communist, Cesare Vivaldi (in *Corrispondenza Socialista*, December 1, 1957): "Properly speaking this novel of Pasternak's is not perhaps a great novel, but it is, without doubt, with all its defects a great book."

V

PUBLICATION PROBLEMS

Doctor Zhivago was the work of many years, the result of the single-minded application of a major talent for the best part of a decade. Its long gestation preceded a difficult birth.

Ruge (as he reports in *Das Schönste*, December, 1958) understood from Pasternak that he began work on *Doctor Zhivago* after the war, broke it off in 1950, and started to work on it again after Stalin's death in 1953. It was completed in 1955.

Ten of the poems printed at the end of *Doctor Zhivago* appeared in the Soviet magazine *Znamya* in April, 1954 (and were later criticized by *Pravda*). They were prefaced with a note by Pasternak:

> The novel will probably be completed in the course of the summer. It covers the period from 1903 to 1929, with an epilogue relating to the Great War for the Fatherland.
>
> The hero, Yu. A. Zhivago, a physician, a thinking man in search of truth, with a creative and artistic bent, dies in 1929. Among his papers written in younger days, a number of poems are found, which will be attached to the book as a final chapter. Some of them are reproduced here.

These are the only excerpts from *Doctor Zhivago* to have appeared in the USSR, if we except those quoted in *Novy Mir*'s letter refusing the novel, published in 1958 (see Appendix II).

Ruge describes a conversation with Pasternak about the difficulties connected with the publication of *Doctor Zhivago*:

He had finished it at the end of 1955. It was then sent to several Moscow publishing houses, and to the editors of some periodicals. At the time Boris Pasternak was quite certain that the book would be published, and so a copy was sent to the Italian publisher Feltrinelli, who has now published the Italian translation in Milan. At that time a young editor, a Communist, as Pasternak expressly emphasized, was enthusiastic about the book. He wanted it to be shortened to make it suitable for publication in the Soviet Union, and Pasternak agreed. . . . When Tolstoy's work first appeared, it too could be published only in the abridged version permitted by the censorship. The complete work, with all the illustrations and the entire text, appeared only in the foreign editions. . . . The first Russian edition was substantially cut, and still it was a great book, Pasternak said.

Boris Pasternak is aware of what country he is living in, and he had raised no objection to the abridgment of his novel. It was true, he said, that he was not one of those authors who are busy day and night rewriting their own books, but he was then certain that an abridged edition would be published in the Soviet Union. However, the book stayed with the publishers. Everyone put the responsibility for decision on someone higher up, and in the end there was no one who felt his position strong enough to approve publication of the novel. The Milan publisher was then asked to postpone publication of the Italian edition, and Feltrinelli had agreed to a delay of six months. At the time Pasternak himself was in hospital, in the Kremlin clinic reserved for particularly eminent people in the Soviet Union. Time passed, and still there was no decision about a Soviet publisher. At last Pasternak was visited in hospital, and asked in a friendly way to request Feltrinelli to return the manuscript for correction. Pasternak had little hope of the response to such a telegram, but he sent it. The telegram was followed by official intervention in Milan, but Pasternak did not speak about that. I got the impression that he too believed that there would not have been such a sensation about his novel if it had first appeared in abridged form in the Soviet Union.[1]

Feltrinelli's agent, Signor Sergio D'Angelo, has described more fully the circumstances in which this telegram was sent.

[1] *Encounter*, March, 1958.

Already in May, 1956, Pasternak himself did not believe that *Doctor Zhivago* would ever be published in the Soviet Union. But it was not until the late summer that the Soviet authorities hinted their displeasure at D'Angelo's taking the manuscript to Italy. Later in the year D'Angelo first met Ivinskaya. She told him, in tears, that the authorities had ordered Pasternak "to send a telegram to Feltrinelli saying he was dissatisfied with the novel and wanted his manuscript back or to suffer serious consequences."

Ivinskaya told D'Angelo that she was trying to persuade Pasternak to send the telegram but that he would not budge. They went to him to try to persuade him to give in. He expressed great resentment:

> We were insulting him and treating him as if he had no sense of dignity whatsoever, he said. Moreover, he added, what would Feltrinelli think—Feltrinelli whom he had just told in a letter that the publication of *Doctor Zhivago* was his main purpose in life? Feltrinelli would think him both mad and a coward. I pointed out that it was precisely because of what he knew of Pasternak that Feltrinelli would certainly take no notice of the telegram. Nor would he think any the worse of Pasternak for sending it. In the end Pasternak agreed to send the telegram.[2]

It will be seen that Pasternak, with all his stubbornness on essentials, was willing to accept cuts, like Tolstoy, but not to do any rewriting to order—as many other Soviet authors had. If we take an example of this from Sholokhov, it is not that his are the worst. For instance, the rewriting of Fadeyev's *The Young Guard* is a much more extreme example. But these changes between the earlier and the 1953 editions of *And Quiet Flows the Don* show what even certain reputable writers are prepared to, or have to, put up with from the political authorities. At the same time Sholokhov figures prominently in the present dispute.

[2] *Sunday Telegraph* (London), May 7, 1961.

In the earlier editions of *And Quiet Flows the Don* a passage in volume II, part 4, chapter 13 runs:

And from all sides those who passionately desired restoration gathered under this banner.

The 1953 version goes:

Counter-revolution, shameless and possessed by the desire to squeeze the revolutionary working class led by Lenin and Stalin in iron pincers and to behead and strangle the forces of revolution, gathered from everywhere under this black banner.

A second example is the end of volume II, part 4, chapter 14. The old version is:

From that day, the threads of the great conspiracy spread out like a black cobweb down the Don, Kuban, Terek and Ural, through the Cossack lands from end to end, from one *stanitsa yourt* to the next.

In the 1953 version, the chapter ends with the identical concluding sentence, but the following passage is inserted before it:

The growth of the revolution not only drove the Russian landlords and bourgeoisie to a frenzy; it aroused the fear and hatred of Britain's, America's and France's imperialist circles. They demanded that the revolution be checked. Stalin, exposing international reaction's conspiracy, wrote at that time: "American imperialist bourgeoisie, financing the coalition of the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie (Milyukov!), the military clique (Kerensky!), and the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie who are slavishly serving Russia's 'living forces' (Tsereteli!)—that is the picture of the present situation; American capital's 'sympathies' with the Moscow Conference, sympathies backed by a five million rouble loan—is not this what those who convened the Conference were seeking to achieve?"

It will be evident that the political insertions, quite apart from the praise of Stalin, gravely affect the whole tone of the passage. Sholokhov eliminated them, together with a good deal of Stalinist sexual bowdlerization committed in the 1953 edi-

tion, when he was able to bring out his *Collected Works* "revised by the author" in 1956–57. But they show what even a comparatively independent writer had to assent to, if a member of the Party and submissive to its discipline. For Sholokhov has often shown considerable recalcitrance. At the Twentieth Party Congress in February, 1956, and on subsequent occasions he spoke firmly against literary bureaucracy. He derided its "patronizing, paternal attitude toward the writer." And he did not fail to point out that the results were not up to the effort put in: "In twenty years, a thousand authors' pens have produced ten good books. Not much, is it?"

A more significant point is made by Pasternak to Ruge when he says that: "Everyone put the responsibility for decision on someone higher up, and in the end there was no one who felt his position strong enough to approve publication of the novel."

And here we may look at the system by which Party decisions of this sort are taken.

The very Italian Communist delegation to Moscow which was given instructions to take steps with Feltrinelli about the publication of *Doctor Zhivago*, later published an account of a series of interviews with members of the Central Committee apparatus of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

After Konstantinov, head of the Agitation and Propaganda Department, had explained that his department held an ideological watching brief over the cultural apparatus proper, the delegation interviewed the Culture and Science Department, represented by its head, A. Kirillin, the head of the Culture Section, Ryurikov, and others. It was explained to the delegates that the Culture Section contained a Literature Sector:

The Literature Sector keeps in contact with the Union of Writers, with the editorial boards of the reviews and newspapers, and with publishing houses. There are literary and artistic reviews by the dozen, and in almost all the Republics there is a publishing house. In Moscow, there are two publishing houses: the State Publishing House for Artistic Literature, con-

trolled by the Ministry of Culture, and the Soviet Writers' Publishing House, controlled by the Union of Soviet Writers.

Apropos of artistic literature, it is necessary to say that after the Twentieth Congress, there was a fairly sharp ideological fight in the USSR because some writers accepted the decisions of the Twentieth Congress in a mistaken and one-sided way, failing to see the wide creative prospects for literature opened up by the Twentieth Congress. These tendencies, which were called "hypercritical" and belonging to "those who only saw the gloomy side of things," appeared in the review *Novy Mir* and in the writers' almanac *Literaturnaya Moskva*.

For example, at a meeting of writers in Moscow, the writer Pokrovsky spoke directly out against the State and the Party apparatus. . . . Khrushchev himself stressed that such intervention tended to introduce an attitude of irresponsibility into the debate. There were other interventions which aimed at instilling distrust with regard to the leaders of the Party. A report on these unwholesome tendencies was submitted to the Central Committee and the Central Committee requested the best elements among the writers themselves to conduct a struggle against such tendencies. Indeed, when Dudintsev made a mistaken intervention in defense of his own book *Not By Bread Alone*, many well-known writers criticized him. With this aim in view, two meetings were convened by the Central Committee, one in December and the other in May, and Khrushchev, Pospelov and the writers themselves exposed these unwholesome tendencies to sharp criticism. Numerous men of letters of different tendencies took part in these meetings, including Ehrenburg: and when Konstantin Simonov tried to defend hypercritical tendencies in literature at these meetings, this tendency was criticized by Korneichuk and other writers.

AMADESI: How does your Department refer matters to the Central Committee?

REPLY: It depends on the importance of the matter. Information can be given orally to one of the Secretaries of the Central Committee. On the other hand, information can be given at the appropriate meetings of the Secretariat or Praesidium at which representatives of writers and artists also sometimes participate.

Our Department is not limited to simply keeping the Cen-

tral Committee informed on developments in the cultural debate but also takes part in working out the projects and decisions of the Secretariat and the Central Committee.[3]

The Russian went on to describe how a recent controversy about the overliberal line taken by the paper *Questions of History* was settled. He gave this as an "example" and no doubt a similar approach is made to literary matters. The stages were as follows:

(1) A meeting between the Culture and Science Department and members of the editorial board of the review.
(2) A meeting convened by the Culture and Science *and* the Agitation and Propaganda Departments, at which were present the editorial board and representatives of other cultural bodies.
(3) "A project drawn up by the Department."
(4) "Long discussion in the Secretariat of the Central Committee," at which Pospelov and Suslov spoke.
(5) Dismissal of the editorial board.

The *Questions of History* affair was of some importance, but *Doctor Zhivago* was hardly less so, and *mutatis mutandis* we may imagine some process resembling the above, perhaps several times repeated, in Pasternak's case.

When the Soviet authorities refused publication Pasternak did not for a moment believe that the reason was any lack of merit. Dr. Nilsson reported a conversation with him:

Doctor Zhivago—why did he write it? His whole life and the development of modern Russia is behind it. The novel occupies his thoughts. He regards it as a consummation of his life and writings. His earlier poems and prose no longer interest him.

He asked me my opinion of *Doctor Zhivago* but interrupted me immediately: "As you have read my poems, I can understand if you feel bewildered, perhaps disappointed. Some of my colleagues have reacted like that.

"In official circles that's given as the reason why my novel

[3] *Problems and Realities of the USSR*, Editori Uniti, Rome, 1958.

hasn't been published here; they say it is a poor novel and its publication would damage my reputation as a poet. That's naturally only an excuse. A writer must be allowed to loosen up; he must be allowed to live and develop. I don't want to become a slave of my own name."[4]

Considerable pressure was put on Feltrinelli to abandon publication of the Italian edition. First there was Pasternak's telegram. Feltrinelli was also approached by Surkov (whose arguments included hints of what might happen to Pasternak), and by two leading members of the Italian Communist Party, who urged him to yield in the name of Party discipline.

However, he felt he was fulfilling the author's intentions in continuing with his plans to publish. In any case, as he pointed out, it was now too late to prevent the appearance of the English and other editions.

Surkov is quoted at length on all this in the Italian Communist organ *Unità* of October 22, 1957 (in an article "Boris Pasternak and the Iron Curtain" by Gino Pagliarini):

"Boris Pasternak," said Surkov, foreseeing our curiosity, "sent the manuscript of his novel to our (Soviet) publishing house. The collective read it, and they all collectively, when sending the manuscript back to its author, wrote him a detailed letter, giving the reasons for their disapproval. Pasternak appeared to accept some of these criticisms and said that he would revise the text. I cannot blame him," remarked Surkov again, "because the book, which I have read myself, as it stands, goes so far as to cast doubt upon the validity of the October Revolution itself, describing it almost as the greatest crime in Russian history. Pasternak also wrote to his Italian publisher, requesting him to return the manuscript so as to give him the opportunity to revise it.

"These are the facts, in all sincerity. *Doctor Zhivago*, as I read yesterday in the *Corriere* and today in the *Espresso*, will appear in spite of all this, against the will of the author. The cold war is beginning to involve literature. If this is freedom seen through Western eyes," ended Surkov, opening wide his arms,

[4] *Daily Mail* (London), October 24, 1958.

"well, I must say, we have a different idea of it. Thus it is for the second time"—and from the way in which he spoke it was clear what a terrible situation Surkov felt this to be—"for the second time in our literary history, after *Mahogany* by Boris Pilnyak, a book by a Russian will be first published abroad."

This amounts to an open threat to Pasternak. Pilnyak perished in the purges, and to mention his name in this context is sinister in the extreme.

Moreover, Surkov had just previously told a Yugoslav journalist: "I have seen my friends, writers, disappear before my eyes, but at the time I believed it necessary, demanded by the revolution." (*Mladost*, October 2, 1957.) In this Yugoslav interview he also attacked Pasternak: "He has alienated himself from us and we have no use for him."

He followed this up with a further attack in *Pravda*, the official organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, on December 1, 1957.

VI

THE SOVIET CONTEXT: *Officials and Readers*

SURKOV THROUGHOUT THIS AFFAIR speaks with the voice of the Party apparatus, as its appointee to the post of controlling the authors, and a candidate member of its Central Committee.

In an interview with Gerd Ruge, after the publication of *Doctor Zhivago* in Italy but before the award of the Nobel Prize to its author, Surkov said of the book: "It is the weakest piece of work this talented poet has produced." Asked why the masses could not be trusted to form their own opinions on literature, he said: "The masses are the masses and they will always be led by somebody." He added: "I came from Communism to literature, not the other way round. I am first and foremost a Communist. Intervention by the Party in literature does not worry me. Somebody is always interfering. And if someone has to interfere, it seems best to me that it should be an intelligent party and not an individual publisher."[1]

A British correspondent had a revealing interview with Surkov in January, 1959:

> His eyes normally twinkle with good nature, but when he spoke of Pasternak his face became stern, he waved his arms excitedly and, at times, his voice rose to a shout.
>
> He told me: "Pasternak is my ideological enemy. I regard him as a talented poet, but a man completely alien to our Soviet

[1] *Encounter*, October, 1958.

way of life. He should have been born thirty years earlier—then he would have been an excellent example of Russian decadence. If I had my way I should turn him out of the country. Pasternak thinks his *Doctor Zhivago* is another *War and Peace*. Actually, it is the weakest book he has ever written. It is a petty travesty of history. Throughout the book there is not one sympathetic portrait of a revolutionary. I know that the Stockholm gentlemen who awarded the Nobel Prize to him did it from non-literary motives. It isn't true that it was brave of him to publish such a book. Several years ago it would have been brave, but not now. If Russia is such a prison to him, let him go abroad and live on all the money his Italian millionaire-Communist publisher has accumulated for him."

I asked Surkov to comment on the telegram sent to him by British writers on Pasternak's behalf.

He said: "Yes, I have the telegram. I've also had telegrams from writers in France, Italy and other countries. That Eliot should sympathise with Pasternak is natural, for he is Catholic and a mystic. But several well-known foreign writers refused to protest—Sartre, for instance."[2]

Sholokhov, Moscow's alternative candidate for the Nobel Prize, is by no means a Party hack, as might be alleged of Surkov. His greatest book *And Quiet Flows the Don* (1928) is not a piece of crude partisanship and it ends on a note almost of pessimism. It is true that the later *Virgin Soil Upturned*, with all its appearance of rough honesty, gave a 'Stalinist' picture of collectivization, and was later denounced as unreal in the "Thaw" novel *The Difficult Campaign*, by Lyuben Kabo—just as Stalin's own ideas of collective farm life were denounced as unreal by Khrushchev. But in 1956 Sholokhov spoke up quite stoutly in favor of the granting of a certain discretion to the Party's writers, and even reminded Surkov personally, that "in the orchestra of poets, besides kettledrums and brass, there are a few other instruments." It is true that he has never been so unamenable to Party management as most of Russia's other leading authors. Yet, if even he can speak in a manner not far

[2] *News Chronicle* (London), January 19, 1959.

removed, except in tone, from Surkov's, it shows the extent of 'discipline.' His words are in any case of interest.

On October 31, 1958, the Swedish *Aftonbladet* arranged a telephone interview with Sholokhov, of which the following is the (recorded) text, as published November 1:

QUESTION: You know that Pasternak got the Nobel Prize for literature?

ANSWER: Yes, I know.

Q.: You also know that he has declined the offer?

A.: No, I had no idea of that.

Q.: Are you aware of the fact that your own name was put forward in connection with the prize?

A.: No—that too is news to me.

Q.: Are you willing to answer some questions concerning Pasternak?

(No clear answer was given to this question, but Sholokhov willingly answered the following ones.)

Q.: Is it your opinion that Pasternak deserved the prize as a novelist and as a poet?

A.: As the Nobel Committee did give him the prize, I have nothing to add.

Q.: I am very keen to know your personal opinion.

A.: My personal opinion is of no interest whatsoever in this connection.

Q.: I'd like to know it nevertheless.

A.: Listen, I'll send you the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of October 25; that is the issue where the board of the Writers' Union made its decision known. That decision tallies with my own personal opinion. I hold no other view.

Q.: By which lines do you Soviet Russians judge whether a writer is worthy of the Nobel Prize or not?

A.: I don't understand your question.

Q.: What are the characteristics of a great writer in Soviet Russia?

A.: As far as I know, the same as in Sweden.

Q.: You mean that we follow identical principles?

A.: I think we do.

Q.: Generally speaking, what do you think of Pasternak's literary work?

A.: That question is hard to answer. It would be easier if I had not been a candidate for the prize myself. As it is, I absolutely refuse to say anything about Pasternak's literary work—especially as I have not read his novel *Doctor Zhivago*.

Q.: Do you think that the Writers' Union made a just decision when it decided to expell Pasternak?

A.: Absolutely just.

Q.: Will you explain your own view with regard to that resolution?

(At this question Sholokhov interrupts rather sharply:)

A.: I have already told you that my own opinion has been clearly stated by the board of the Writers' Union. I am a member of that board, and I fully share the general opinion there.

Q.: Considering the wording of the resolution, I'd like to ask you why Pasternak was not expelled long before he was found worthy to receive the Nobel Prize?

A.: You ought to understand by now that Pasternak did not get the prize because of the book's artistic value but because of its anti-Soviet tendency. His political, anti-Soviet purpose brought him the prize.

Q.: *Doctor Zhivago*, then, is considered to be an anti-Soviet novel?

A.: Definitely.

Q.: Do you believe that your Union and *Pravda* were justified in charging the Swedish Academy the way they did?

A.: As I see it, yes.

Q.: What facts motivated these attacks? They included a number of definite assertions that cannot be left unchallenged here in Sweden if they prove to be true.

A.: Why do you think so? Did you never ask yourself why Leo Tolstoy did not get the Nobel Prize? Do you consider him a great writer or not?

Q.: Of course, he was! One of the greatest.

A.: Then why did you not give him the Nobel Prize?

Q.: A difficult question to answer. This is a newspaper, you see—not the Swedish Academy.

(Mihail Sholokhov clearly seems to think that the best way to defend oneself is to attack. He goes on:)

A.: And why did neither Chekhov nor Gorky get the prize? They were much superior to Bunin, were they not?

Q.: Am I to understand that your people in Moscow are basing their charges against our Academy on logical arguments like yours rather than on actual proof?

A.: No. Try and get me right. If you had given the prize to Gorky instead of Bunin, you would not only have satisfied the Russian people . . .

Q.: In other words: your offensive against the Swedish Academy is not founded on any factual information?

A.: In my opinion, the Swedish Academy, and especially its Nobel Committee, is not unbiased when it comes to judging the artistic value of the authors in question. This opinion has been worded both by the Union's resolution and by David Zaslavsky's article (in *Pravda*).[3]

Q.: Do you think Boris Pasternak did right when he disclaimed his prize?

A.: I don't know whether he did or not.

Q.: Then let me tell you that he sent a telegram to the Swedish Academy, declining the honor.

A.: In that case, he has been as slow in making up his mind as we were before expelling him. He should not have let those Italian newspapermen have a manuscript that had been disapproved of in his own country.

Q.: But those journalists were friends of the Soviet Union and members of the Italian Communist Party.

A.: (Ironically) Oh, yes. The whole campaign that the book has started against the Soviet Union seems friendly enough indeed.

Q.: What will happen to Boris Pasternak as a novelist and as a poet?

A.: It's hard to tell. You'd better ask Pasternak himself. He'll probably know more about it than I do. I'm not a fortune-teller.

Q.: How are he and his family supposed to earn their living in the future?

A.: Do you think that till now they've just been living on his hope of getting the Nobel Prize?

Q.: Not at all. But is not the very existence of a Soviet Russian author virtually dependent on his membership in the Writers' Union?

[3] See Appendix III.

A.: The fact that several writers have been expelled from the Union has not prevented them from living much as they did before. Our purpose is not to expose a man to any material pressure, but to bring a moral pressure to bear on his conscience, on his patriotic mind. Till now, Pasternak earned his living as a poet and as a translator. I suppose he'll continue to live that way. But I repeat that this talk about Pasternak's future is none of my business. His fate is not mine.

Q.: I have no more questions, Mr. Sholokhov, but perhaps you'd like to make a general statement?

A.: No—I have nothing to add.

Q.: Then I thank you for this interview. *Do svidaniya!*

A.: *Vsego dobrogo!* (I wish you all the best!)

It was reported in 1959 that Sholokhov was having his own difficulties with the authorities about his current novel. These, it was said, hinged partly on the ending, where the author's draft left the honest Communist committing suicide while in prison under false charges.[4] However, Sholokhov, who accompanied Khrushchev to the United States in the autumn, gave an interview in which he described this report as "mad fantasy,"[5] and when the work finally appeared in 1960, it was with an 'orthodox' ending. It is, of course, the case that under Party rules members disagreeing with any particular decision must yet not dispute it in public.

That pressures of this sort are still being brought to bear seems clear from the long delay in publishing Ilya Ehrenburg's current work. His novel, *The Thaw*, which appeared eight years ago, during the first post-Stalin relaxation, attracted considerable adverse comment when things tightened up in 1954, and gave its name to the whole liberalizing movement. Ehrenburg is now reported as having told a student gathering at Moscow University in March, 1960, that he had "long ago" finished his latest work. When asked why, in that case, it had not come out

[4] Harrison Salisbury in the *New York Times* of September 1, 1959.
[5] *New York Times*, September 26, 1959.

and why so few Ehrenburg books had been seen lately, he replied pointedly: "Ask my publishers."[6]

It is not that there is any reason to doubt Sholokhov's basic sincerity, when he argued that writers were not dictated to by the Party, but wrote with their hearts, which "belong to the Party and the people." It is simply that in Stalin's time certainly, and perhaps this year as well, such a way of putting it has plainly been an oversimplification, concealing an area of basic dispute between even the Communist writer and the cultural bureaucrat.

Moreover, Sholokhov still spoke slightingly of the "hermit crab" Pasternak, adding that he had never met him and that this was Pasternak's misfortune. Thus, if in a comparatively mild form, he continued to express the view of the official literary public in the USSR.

What other public exists?

Soon after Khrushchev's speech, when voices urging greater freedom were beginning to be heard in Russia, a Soviet literary paper (*Znamya*, April, 1956) commented:

> It is surprising to find that there are people who have forgotten all about the Party spirit in literature; people who in their zeal for what they call creative many-sidedness in literature urge an attitude of *tout pardonner*. These are people who call upon us to revert to the state of affairs in the early and middle 'twenties, and who affirm that everything was right and perhaps even ideal at that time.

This condemnation of any return to the situation as it had been under Lenin is echoed all through the Soviet press. Surkov's organ once again complained over a year later:

> We heard voices which gave mistaken interpretations of "freedom of thought" and literary freedom. But we are not partisans of any kind of freedom. . . . We Soviet writers do not support a freedom in literature which stands in contrast to

[6] *New York Times*, March 10, 1960.

the principles of Party-mindedness (*partiinost*) and Communist ideological content (*ideinost*).[7]

It is evident that there are "people," "voices," who take a view of literature different from that prevalent in the hierarchy.

Soon after the denunciation of Pasternak in 1958 there appeared in the same periodical an interesting, though very hostile, account of a literary intelligentsia unamenable to Party control, and evidently exerting considerable influence. The attack was on

small groups which try to make a "literary climate," to impart their taste to youth and to create a certain sham "public opinion." Being without a real, profound culture, this pseudo-intelligentsia has absorbed everything bad that once existed in decadent circles. . . . They unreservedly condemn those who do not belong to their circle, cynically, scornfully sniff when the name of a good, honest writer is mentioned in their presence, and make "martyrs" of those who have been subjected to just criticism, who are known chiefly or even only on account of their "bold" words during the revisionist attacks of not so long ago. These pseudo-intellectuals write something here and there, edit . . .

These gentlemen live by literary tittle-tattle, engage in intrigue, draw into their intrigues people with names, influence young, simple-hearted, politically undeveloped writers, incline them toward a corresponding spirit, and then remain in the shadows and exchange hypocritical sympathetic sighs about those who have been "treated badly" and "picked to pieces." It is remarkable with what persistence these pseudo-intellectuals clutch at every work that sounds ambiguous! It was thus that they clutched at Ehrenburg's *Lessons of Stendhal*, at Paustovsky's unfortunate article. . . .[8]

Again, on September 2, 1960, *Izvestia* published an article, "Idlers Scrambling Up Parnassus," attacking what it described as a "typewritten journal," *Syntaxis*, consisting of bitter and unorthodox poems by a number of named authors, including "professional poets," and designed for a "large circle of readers."

[7] *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, June 22, 1957.
[8] Lev Nikulin, "The Culture of the Writer," *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, November 20, 1958.

How this 'underground' literary attitude persists in spite of the discouragements of the regime was illustrated in an article in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* of April 27, 1957—"Childe Harold from the Tverskoi Boulevard." In this the young students of the Gorky Literary Institute (in which Surkov long played a leading role) were criticized:

Where do they get it from, these young poets who have not yet made their labor contribution to the great cause of the people? After all, they have completed the course of studies at our schools; they have been brought up on the works of Fadeyev, Sholokhov, Nikolay Ostrovsky. And suddenly you get decadence; suddenly in their eyes our Soviet people, workers, builders of the new, progressive, free social order have been transformed into "men of iron," with "static minds."

One of the young writers was charged with saying: "I want to learn from Andrey Bely." Similarly, through 1959, attacks were made on students who praised or circulated in manuscript the works of Pasternak, as well as those of Bely and other nonconformists.

The way in which these great 'decadent' poets are still treasured, and their works remain known even when unobtainable, had been illustrated by Ilya Ehrenburg, in an interview with a Polish writer. He

talked about Pasternak and Martynov. Martynov did not have for many years the possibility of appearing in print. But he did not give up poetry. He wrote for himself and for his friends. On his fiftieth birthday his readers organized for him an evening of poetry-reading. The auditorium was overflowing. It became obvious that Martynov's unpublished poems were familiar to a wide public. Similarly with Boris Pasternak. When, now and again, he forgot a word, while reciting his poems, the audience prompted him.[9]

There is, in fact, an important literary public which does not share the views of the cultural bureaucrats. Pasternak was not the lonely figure we are sometimes led to suppose.

[9] *Nowa Kultura*, September 1, 1957.

VII

ON THE NOBEL PRIZES

THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES have often stated since October, 1958, that the Nobel Prize was awarded to Pasternak as "a purely political act hostile to our country and aimed at intensifying the cold war," with "nothing at all in common with an impartial assessment of the literary merits of Pasternak's work." And this—in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of October 25, 1958—is a comparatively moderate statement of a view often put with much greater intemperance. It is also alleged that the award was part of a plot, which the Swedish *littérateurs* were put up to by "their inspirers across the Atlantic," becoming "a tool of international reaction."

The thesis that the Nobel Committee were acting simply as agents of the supposed organizers of cold war may be taken as absurd. Or at least, not a shadow of evidence exists, or has ever been alleged, in support of it. It seems that either the Soviet spokesmen believe this sort of thing in the absence of evidence because they cannot conceive of any other explanation, or they do not believe in it. If they do not, we need not necessarily conclude that their attitude is one of complete cynicism. It may be regarded simply as their way, which has become conventional in Soviet circumstances, of alleging political hostility—just as Beria was described not simply as a dangerous political enemy, which he no doubt was, but also as the agent of an imperialist intelligence service, which is unlikely. If we read this accusa-

tion of a plot as simply a way of saying that the members of the Swedish Academy have political biases, and that these may have influenced them in their choice, at least to some extent, we have a thesis which is not in itself absurd. Yet it is one which it is almost equally difficult to investigate.

But if we cannot examine the motives of the Swedish selectors we have at least looked at the expressions of opinion of high literary authorities throughout the world. Unanimity is not to be expected, but as the views so discovered, including those of many Communists, are sufficiently in general agreement, we may perhaps conclude that the Swedish writers were thinking on similar lines. And if we are to seek outside pressure, it is reasonable to imagine that this "world literary opinion" would have more effect on the selectors than orders transmitted from Washington.

On the question of political pressure, it needs also to be said that, from a Swedish point of view, it was likely to come from the other direction. It was apparent that the Soviet authorities might treat an award to Pasternak as unfriendly, and that it would thus do some harm to the neutral position to which Swedes of all parties remain attached. And an award to anyone else would have had no political repercussions at all and have been quite safe. At this time the Soviet Union was bringing pressure to bear, and successfully, on neutral Finland to prevent publication of a book. (This was a political book, certainly, in the form of the memoirs of Leino, the former Communist Minister of the Interior: yet no Western intervention had ever taken place on similar lines even in a case of an overtly political nature.)

While the Nobel Committee was considering its awards, the fear was expressed that such considerations might prevent Pasternak from receiving quite his due. It is impossible to estimate whether some weight attached to them in the minds of the selectors, but it is at least conceivable that they more than balanced simple political prejudice.

The Nobel Prizes are awarded by different bodies. The Peace Prize (of which it may fairly be said that some of the awards have been of an extremely controversial nature, politically speaking) is allocated by a committee of five elected by the Norwegian Parliament. The scientific and medical prizes are given by Swedish scientific institutions. And the literary prize is awarded by the Swedish Academy of Literature.

On October 28, 1958, the Nobel Prize for Physics was awarded to the Soviet scientists Cherenkov, Tamm and Frank. It was accepted, and the scientists went to Stockholm to receive their awards.

In accepting the Physics Prize for their scientists the Russians are not being quite as inconsistent as might be supposed. In the article "Nobel Prizes" in the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia* (Second Edition, vol. 30, passed for press December, 1954) the award of the scientific prizes is treated more or less sympathetically, the article adding: "However, the judging of the Nobel Prizes, especially for literary production and activity for peace, often takes place in the political interests of reactionary circles." It cites André Gide as an example of this. (It may be noted that this 1954 emphasis on the literary prizes came out *after* Pasternak's first nomination for the prize the previous year.) The first edition of the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia* (vol. 4, passed for press June, 1939) had spoken of "every sort of intrigue" by bourgeois governments on behalf of their nominees, but particularly in the case of the Peace Prize.

Yet the Peace Prize had been awarded to the German pacifist Ossietsky in 1936.[1] Ossietsky was then in a Nazi concentration camp, where he later died. There is no doubt that this was a political award—the Peace Prize, unlike the literary prize, is, as we have seen, awarded by politicians. The Soviet government approved, its organs stating that the award "expressed

[1] With the result that Pasternak's is not the first politically inspired refusal of these prizes. The German chemists Kuhn and Butenandt, winners in 1938 and 1939 respectively, were also obliged to renounce them.

the opinion of progressive mankind."[2] In fact, the Communist authorities have not decried political motivations as such.

Still, an article in *Pravda* on the 1958 physics awards was being reasonably consistent when it argued:

> In the light of these facts, which show the recognition by the Swedish Academy of Science of the major merits of Russian and Soviet scientists, the award of a Prize for Literature to Pasternak for his work which slanderously depicts Soviet actuality and distorts the thinking and aspirations, deeds and behavior of the Soviet intelligentsia, appears particularly tendentious. The award of this Prize for Literature was prompted entirely by political motives.
>
> In this connection it is impossible not to recall Lenin's dictum that if the bourgeois scientists are capable of objectivity in the sphere of special research work, in the assessment of social events, including literary works, they are entirely under the influence of the ideology of the dominant class.[3]

The Soviet press has alleged that the Literary Prizes are regularly awarded to reactionaries. But in fact winners have included Romain Rolland, Anatole France, Bernard Shaw, Thomas Mann, and Halldor Laxness.

Soviet commentators have made one perfectly sound point, that the Nobel adjudicators were grossly mistaken in not making the award to Tolstoy, Chekhov and Gorky. The fact that they did not certainly proves that the judgment of those early adjudicators was defective. It cannot, in the case of Tolstoy and Chekhov at least, have any bearing on the question of political bias. And indeed there are many other great names in world literature who did not receive the prize, though they certainly merited it.

As André Maurois pointed out, the great Russian writers of whom the Soviet press now speaks had been "rightly proud of the prestige they enjoyed in the West," and this was so even when their own government looked on them with disfavor.

[2] *Pravda*, November 27, 1936.
[3] *Pravda*, October 29, 1958.

Even as to Chekhov (who resigned from the Imperial Academy in 1902 as a protest against the expulsion of Gorky on political grounds), the Soviet authorities are not themselves entirely blameless. The present definitive Soviet edition of Chekhov's writings—*Complete Works and Letters*—is a magnificent and scholarly compilation in twenty volumes. But it stoops to omissions of opinions of Chekhov's not officially approved of. For example, there are ten lines left out of a letter written from Hong Kong to his friend Suvorin. These are in praise of British colonial administration, and end:

I was indignant when I heard my Russian fellow travelers criticize the British for their exploitation of the natives. Yes, I thought to myself, the Englishman does exploit the Chinese, the Sepoys, the Hindus, but in return he gives them roads, drains, museums, and Christianity, and what about you—you also exploit, but what do you give?

Other omissions occur when he expresses boredom with the Russian theatre, calls southern Slavs "uncultured," suggests that young writers should be sent "on assignments abroad," supports the 'formalist' producer Meyerhold, and so on.[4] To omit views of a long dead writer, even if they are not in accord with those held by a government, seems to be a misrepresentation of his attitudes, and casts a certain doubt on that government's accuracy in claiming him as their own.

The position of Gorky is even more interesting. He would not, perhaps, be generally rated in the same class as Tolstoy or Chekhov, but most people would agree that he deserved the Nobel Prize at least as much as some who actually got it. The official account of his death, which has never been denied, is that he was poisoned on the orders of the then Soviet Commissar for Internal Affairs. This was done, according to the latter's confession in 1938, on the orders of Zinoviev and the opposition Communists. But, as Khrushchev himself made clear in his

[4] See Professor Gleb Struve in the *Slavonic and Eastern European Review*, June, 1955.

Secret Speech, many crimes attributed to the opposition are now known to have been organized by Stalin. And it has been alleged, by a number of exiled oppositionists later proved right on other cases, that Stalin ordered Gorky's removal too. From a literary point of view what is interesting is that it has been stated that the diaries and other manuscripts that Gorky was working on at the time of his death went into the NKVD files and are still there. This may not be true, yet a full investigation would be interesting, if it were possible. It is, in any case, known that there is much fine manuscript work by other Russian writers which has not been made available—for example, poems by Marina Tsvetaeva, whose work Pasternak, like others, has highly praised. It is feared that Pasternak's last play may, at best, suffer this fate.

Russian spokesmen have also referred to the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature to Ivan Bunin in 1933. Bunin was, as they point out, an émigré and in general hostile to the Soviet regime. But it is curious that even in Stalin's time the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia*, in a volume passed for publication in May, 1951, gave an account of Bunin's work which, though highly critical, is not without favorable remarks. And Bunin is much more highly praised in a very recent Soviet reference book, as a "brilliant stylist and master of the short story and of landscape lyricism." Nothing hostile is said; it is stated that he "unmasked capitalism"; and even as to the works composed in exile the only comment is that they were mainly based "on impressions of life in the homeland."[5]

That an Academy is likely to be infallible is a proposition that would be rejected by all literary men in the less highly organized countries: yet there have been fewer objections to Pasternak on other than political grounds than is usually the case. And, of course, academies are not immortal beings in their own right, but composed of men. If the Swedish Academy was wrong, or even biased, a generation ago, it does not follow that

[5] *Small Soviet Encyclopaedia*, vol. 2, passed for publication October, 1958.

it still is. In fact, the literary prizes of the past ten or fifteen years have been subjected to far less criticism than some of the earlier awards. Each case must anyhow be judged on its own merits and if anything is amiss it should be proved by evidence and not analogies.

It may also be remarked that the awards have not infrequently gone to writers whose accounts of life in their home country have been of a nonconformist type. William Faulkner's novels about American life are hardly likely to fit the views of any American politician who wishes to represent his country as dominated by progress, good feeling, and general optimism. And yet no protest, as far as I know, has been made by the American government or any group of American writers. The Soviet attitude is unique in that it identifies hostility or indifference to the regime with lack of patriotism and ingratitude to the people. Other countries, and even other governments, have found no difficulty and seen no contradiction in honoring writers the greater part of whose work has been devoted to pessimistic and 'negative' aspects of their life.

The Soviet government itself awards Lenin (formerly Stalin) Prizes to foreigners. The literary quality of the authors who receive them is often moderate, to say the least. Their political nature is, in fact, overt. They are made only to those who share, or approach, the Soviet view on most issues. (It is true that these prize-winners often change their views as the result of some later experience, as in the case of a wide range of writers from the Chinese woman author and Communist veteran, Ting Ling, now condemned for revisionism, to the Hungarian Tamas Aczel, accused of a major role in the 1956 revolution, or the American Howard Fast.)

These awards, on the face of it, constitute just the interference in other countries' affairs that the Soviet spokesmen allege, with less substance, in the case of the Nobel Prize. Yet foreign governments rarely, if ever, protest, nor require the recipient to refuse. By a curious coincidence, on October 27, 1958, the

Swedish pro-Communist writer Arthur Lundkvist was freely awarded the Lenin Prize at a ceremony in Stockholm. He strongly attacked the Nobel award to Pasternak at the time, but he later protested to the Russians about their "fantastic accusations."

Is *Doctor Zhivago*, and Pasternak's work in general, of sufficient stature to justify the Nobel Prize?

It will be plain that no objective test exists. Even with scientific awards it is not possible to find any absolute criterion, and accusations of bias are made even in cases where there are no political considerations. A mathematician writes of the awards made by the four-yearly International Mathematical Conference: "The jury always consists of a selection of the world's greatest mathematicians. Their task is not an easy one, nor is their decision universally acclaimed on all occasions."[6]

All that can be done is to consider, as we have done, the opinions of those admittedly qualified to speak. The answer seems plain.

There is a further point. The Nobel award was made for "important achievement both in contemporary lyric poetry and in the field of the great Russian epic tradition."

It has been suggested that the prize was given, in reality, almost solely for *Doctor Zhivago* and that the reference to the poetry was a polite, or protective, gesture. The reputation of a poet is seldom known in as wide circles as that of a novelist, particularly across the barriers of language. Yet where such poetry circulates, Pasternak's reputation was probably the highest of any living poet in any language—and he had in fact been nominated for the Nobel on his poetry alone, in 1953.

Some of the opinions quoted already include assessments of Pasternak as a poet. But the point should perhaps be stressed further.

Sir Maurice Bowra in his *The Creative Experiment* (London,

[6] D. Pedoe, *The Gentle Art of Mathematics*, London, 1958.

1949) includes a thirty-page essay on Pasternak's first two books (1917–1923) which everybody interested in the poet should read. He treats him as one of the truly great writers of our time and says of these early works: "His temperament and his circumstances combined to produce the new kind of poetry which was his to give and which his time needed. . . . Pasternak has done something which is unique in his time." He concludes: "Through his unerring sense of poetry he has reached to wide issues and shown that the creative calling, with its efforts and its frustrations and its unanticipated triumphs, is, after all, something profoundly natural and closely related to the sources of life."

André Malraux, presenting Pasternak to the International Congress of Writers in Paris in 1935, said: "Before us stands one of the most considerable poets of our time."

A Yugoslav commentator writes that "even in his homeland, after the death of Blok, Yessenin, and Mayakovsky, he was regarded as the greatest Russian poet." (*Nasi Razgledi*, November 1, 1958.)

Before the novel appeared the Italian Left-wing (Nenni) Socialist paper *Avanti* referred to the forthcoming publication of *Doctor Zhivago* as certainly the literary event of the year, adding that Pasternak ranked "among the greatest living poets."

Even the current *Soviet Encyclopaedia*, while criticizing Pasternak's poetry (though in rather a respectful way) on non-aesthetic grounds, grants its stature; for instance: "Pasternak's lyrics have high poetic culture, but suffer from subjectivity."[7]

Earlier Soviet views had been more explicit. For example: "Pasternak's outstanding poetic ability has reserved for him the reputation of a great and individually unique poet."[8]

D. S. Mirsky, an émigré who became a Communist (and who after writing a number of works of strong Communist tone on literary and other matters, returned to the USSR and disap-

[7] *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia*, Second Edition, vol. 32.
[8] *Soviet Literary Encyclopedia*, vol. 8, 1934.

peared in the purges), writes in his standard textbook: "Soviet poetry has ever since fallen behind prose, although it may boast of Boris Pasternak, who easily ranks among the greatest lyric poets of this century."[9]

Even the *bien-pensant* writers who remain in favor to this day have given Pasternak the highest possible praise. Ilya Ehrenburg put him on the same level as Lermontov;[10] Nikolay Tikhonov, now Chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee, wrote of him:

> Boris Pasternak offers us a complex world of psychological depth. What an ebullient, striving, and intense mood, such an art of unceasing movement; how poetic and profoundly candid in his attempt to see, to bring together in one moment, all the multiplicity of crisscrossing poetical movements in the world.[11]

His old friend Konstantin Fedin, now First Secretary of the Soviet Writers' Union, as recently as 1957 wrote in his book, *Writer, Art, Time*, of Pasternak's "inexhaustible resourcefulness." A less friendly Communist critic, O. Shtut, writing in *Novy Mir*, No. 9 of 1956, could still say: "Opinions may differ with regard to Boris Pasternak, but even his most malicious enemies will not call him a minor poet."

Similarly Professor Gleb Struve, the best known writer on Russian literature in the West, calls Pasternak "the greatest of Russian poets,"[12] and again: "Boris Leonidovich Pasternak (born 1890) is undoubtedly the most significant of the living Soviet poets."[13] A similar view, in fact, is taken by virtually all who tried to present Soviet literature to the foreign reader at a time when Pasternak was apparently in good standing with the authorities.

These opinions were so widely and firmly held in the inter-

[9] *A History of Russian Literature*, 1949.
[10] *Literaturnaya Kritik*, No. 8, 1935.
[11] *Literaturny Sovremennik*, No. 1, 1936.
[12] *Twenty-five Years of Soviet Literature*, London, 1944.
[13] *Soviet Russian Literature 1917–1950*, Norman, Okla., 1951.

national literary world that they were well enough known even to many who were not directly interested. We may take a striking example: the Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, though saying that he had not himself read Pasternak, was sufficiently aware of his reputation. At his press conference in New Delhi on November 7, 1958, he said: "I know his reputation as a poet has been a great one for a considerable time and as a great literary figure we have respected him and respect him."

VIII

THE AWARD AND THE ASSAULT

On October 23, 1958, it was officially announced that the Nobel Prize for Literature had been awarded to Pasternak. At once, the most stormy period of all began.

Max Frankel, the *New York Times* correspondent in Moscow, saw Pasternak when it appeared certain that the prize would be his. Pasternak spoke of "a new role, a new heavy responsibility." He added: "I am extremely happy, but you must understand that I am confident that I will move immediately into this new lonely role, as though it had always been so."

He went on to describe the troubles that had already beset him in the year following the publication of *Doctor Zhivago* in Italy. Only the Poles had given him work. Now he foresaw further trouble, but said that Frankel must understand: "I am not a victim of any injustice. I have not been singled out for special treatment. Under the circumstances nothing else could have been done."[1]

When the official announcement came, Pasternak told another correspondent: "This is a great joy for me. I don't feel any tremendous emotion. I'm just very glad."[2]

To another he said: "To receive this prize fills me with joy and also gives me great moral support. But my joy today is a lonely joy."[3]

[1] *New York Times*, International Edition, October 26, 1958.
[2] *Manchester Guardian*, October 25, 1958.
[3] *New York Times*, International Edition, October 27, 1958.

At this time he seems to have had some hope of being able to go to Stockholm and receive the prize. He told the BUP correspondent: "If I do travel to Stockholm, at least I will have a month and a half to relax and rest."[4]

The first comment by a senior Soviet official on the Nobel award was that made by Mikhailov, Minister of Culture, in an interview with the Moscow correspondent of the Swedish Communist paper. We have already quoted him as saying that he was "surprised over the choice. I know Pasternak is a true poet and an excellent translator but why should he get the prize now, many years after his best poems were published?"

This was cold, but not violent; it looks as if the decision to launch an all-out attack may not yet have been made final. But on October 25, *Literaturnaya Gazeta* published the first denunciation of the award in an anonymous article, "A Provocative Sally of International Reaction" (given in full in Appendix I). At the same time, it printed the letter sent by the board of *Novy Mir* to Pasternak, when refusing the novel in September, 1956 (Appendix II).

This issue of *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, according to the Moscow correspondent of *Le Monde*, Michel Tatu, was awaited by queues at the kiosks from six in the morning on the day of its appearance and sold out in a few minutes.[5]

The *Literaturnaya Gazeta* article is much more violent and question-begging than the *Novy Mir* letter. But it will be seen that in neither do literary questions proper have much place. (Even in the letter, moreover, there is a curious misapprehension: for where Pasternak is openly concerned with showing that one of the conditions of life is that a character is liable to error, weakness and inconsistency, the editors assume throughout that he is "justifying" every action by Doctor Zhivago. This is an odd fault if committed by literary men, but in view of Pasternak's remarks about the responsibility for refusing the

[4] *Manchester Guardian*, October 25, 1958.
[5] *Le Monde*, December 11, 1958.

novel having been taken "higher up," we may perhaps assume that the letter was at least not drafted by the more professional members of the board.)

In spite of the harshness of the attack, Pasternak does not at first seem to have felt that the whole resources of the State were behind it. (And it may indeed have been that Surkov and his organ were making the running for a rather more reluctant political leadership.) Pasternak's first move on the day the attack came out was to follow up his formal telegram of acknowledgment to the Swedish Academy with the following: "Immensely thankful, touched, proud, astonished, abashed. PASTERNAK."

But now a campaign of astonishing violence and coarseness began. On October 26, *Pravda*, the voice of the Central Committee of the Party, which comes directly under the control of the Secretariat with no intermediate departmental apparatus, carried an article, "Reactionary Propaganda Uproar over a Literary Weed" (see Appendix III). This put all the arguments of *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in a cruder form, and asserted that Pasternak should have refused the prize. Its author, David Zaslavsky (a former Menshevik described by Lenin as a hack who should never be allowed to cross the threshold of a Bolshevik newspaper office), is seldom called in by *Pravda* except when they wish for articles of a violent tone on various subjects.

Zaslavsky was also the author of a "parable" which appeared the following week. In it a snake finds itself accidentally among free-born eagles on the healthy mountains. ("Mountain peaks are traditional as a symbol of the revolution," says the author.) "The snake is wriggling at our feet. It is irresistibly drawn downward to its native swamps where it enjoys the odors of rot and decay so much, where it is so warm and comfortable in the poetical dungwaters of lyrical manure." In the end the snake is "thrown aside."

On October 27, the Praesidium of the Union of Soviet

Writers expelled Pasternak from membership in the Union (see Appendix IV).

All the Soviet literary journals are officially described as "organs" of the Union of Writers of the USSR or of one of its branches. Nominations to the editorial boards are dependent on the Union, which acts in accord with the wishes of the Central Committee Departments of Science and Culture and of Agitation and Propaganda. Surkov, then head of the Union, is himself, as we have said, a candidate member of the Central Committee. The Union runs the literary fund "Litfond"—founded a century ago—which derives its revenue from publishing houses and magazines. These pay into it an equivalent of 10 per cent of sums paid to the authors and it has certain other resources, including an assignment from the USSR State budget. Its benefits are normally extended only to Union members. They include material assistance to their families, medical treatment, measures to improve their living conditions and monetary grants to writers working on new projects. The fund also maintains sanatoria, rest homes, restaurants and kindergartens for the use of members and provides them with other services such as laundries and shoe repairs. Pasternak was not expelled from Litfond.

On the other hand *Pravda* had recently carried an appeal from Ehrenburg and other authors about writers' pensions, in which a decree of the Council of Ministers of August 7, 1957, was referred to as denying pensions to nonmembers of the Union of Writers.

There was thus reason to believe that economic difficulties were being created for the writer. Sholokhov denied, in his interview with *Aftonbladet*, that expulsion from the Union necessarily affected a writer's standard of living. But Pasternak himself had said that he already only had work thanks to a Polish contract. And he later told a British visitor, Mr. Alan Moray Williams, that he was "a little worried" about his financial

position.[6] So it seems that economic pressure was one of the many being applied, or at least threatened, by this expulsion. And this is, of course, relevant to the later accusations of his receiving royalties from the West.

A French correspondent in Moscow gives an account of the supplementary meeting of the Moscow Writers. He says that almost eight hundred attended and that not only did a mere fourteen speak (as stated in the Soviet press) but the session was prematurely ended, by a majority vote, after five hours. He describes the *rapporteur*, Smirnov, as making a number of attacks on Pasternak. One of these was that he had "refused in his time to sign the famous Stockholm Appeal," that is, the notorious "anti-atom bomb" peace appeal of Stalin's heyday. Smirnov went on to condemn Pasternak for receiving congratulations from such people as "the *fascisant* writer Camus" who, he added, is "almost unknown in France."[7]

Of the fourteen who addressed the gathering only two, including Boris Polevoy, are of any standing. (Polevoy is particularly known in the West for having, when in the United States in 1955, told both Howard Fast and the representatives of American Jewish organizations that the poet Leib Kvitko was alive and working, being a neighbor of his. It was later announced officially that Kvitko had been wrongfully executed in 1952.)

As is usual after controversial public statements from the center, these announcements were followed by the publication of interviews with representative workers, meetings of local groups in factories and others, and speeches by peripheral politicians—all of them in support of the official view. Some of these must strike the non-Soviet reader as a little odd, as when a meeting of Kalmyk writers condemned Pasternak for having written "absolutely nothing" about the happy life of the Kalmyks. As the Kalmyks were only rehabilitated in 1957, after

[6] *News Chronicle* (London), January 19, 1959.
[7] *Le Monde*, December 11, 1958.

being deported *en bloc* in 1943 and having their names removed from the list of Soviet nations, it might seem unlikely that a realistic novel about them would be on quite the lines implied.

None of the indignant citizens had read the novel.

On October 29, the most violent attack yet made was launched at a public meeting of the Young Communist League by its recently appointed First Secretary, Semichastny, in the presence of Khrushchev and other leaders of the Party and Government. For the first time it was suggested that Pasternak should be expelled from the Soviet Union. (See Appendix V.)

On the same day Pasternak sent a telegram to the Swedish Academy as follows:

> Considering the meaning this award has been given in the society to which I belong, I must reject this undeserved prize which has been presented to me.
>
> Please do not receive my voluntary rejection with displeasure.
>
> PASTERNAK

Pasternak told the BUP correspondent Henry Shapiro later that day: "I made the decision quite alone. I did not consult anybody. I have not even told my good friends."

The following day the Swedish Academy acknowledged Pasternak's refusal in the following terms: "The Swedish Academy has received your refusal with deep regret, sympathy and respect."

Pasternak told visitors after the refusal of the prize "that he thought silence the best policy, so as to emerge 'safe and sound,' as he put it."[8]

The threat of expulsion from Russia was evidently one which gave Pasternak the greatest pain. On November 1 he wrote a letter to Khrushchev personally, pleading that this should not be done (Appendix VI). *Tass* put out the letter next day, together with a comment to the effect that Pasternak would be allowed to leave the USSR if he wished.

[8] Reuters, October 30, 1958.

In his letter Pasternak says, quite consistently with all his previous attitude, that he is taken aback by the "political campaign" which has begun in the West.

He was evidently now under considerable strain. BUP, on November 2, 1958, reported Mrs. Pasternak as saying that "the recent excitement over the Nobel Prize had been too much for her husband who had had a heart condition for some time. He was now resting and they planned to live very quietly."

The campaign against him continued in the press, and on November 5, *Pravda* published another letter under his signature (Appendix VII). It contains a passage which speaks of the political nature of the award. But though it disclaims misinterpretations that have been put on his work, even here nothing is directly retracted. Nor does he regret the genuine admiration *Doctor Zhivago* had aroused in the West. He never did: in January, 1960, he told Mrs. Carlisle that he was "immensely happy and proud of it."

Even so, the letter represents a step toward meeting the wishes of the authorities, and goes further than he had evidently wished to in his first letter. The pressures now being put on him were great. Nor were they confined to threats directed at himself personally. As became known later (and as we shall see in the following chapter), all through the ensuing period, right up to his death, he was intensely worried at threats directed against hostages in the person of his dearest friend, Olga Ivinskaya, and her daughter Irina, whom he had virtually adopted. Mrs. Ivinskaya, on her release from a labor camp after Stalin's death, had again devoted herself to him, acting as his agent, managing his business affairs and typing *Doctor Zhivago*.

The police maintained this atmosphere of blackmail by frequently summoning Mrs. Ivinskaya for interrogation. Pasternak wrote to a friend outside Russia of "the disguised dependence in which the secret police constantly holds us," and of "the whole family of O, her son, her daughter and herself, as a kind of hostage"; and to another: "The direction which this menac-

ing wind takes is always such as to strike first at my friend O."[9] His expulsion from Russia would, apart from anything else, have left them at the mercy of the KGB.

The authorities paid a different type of attention to the poet himself. Throughout this time, any change in his daily routine was immediately a cause for inquiry and suspicion. He later gave a German journalist some of the tone of this period:

> Maybe they feared I would commit suicide . . . my house was a real hospital at that time. They gave me a woman doctor as nurse. I told her she could go home, she need not worry about me. But she did not go because she was under orders. Maybe they feared I would commit suicide.[10]

This was later one of the reasons, as we shall see, why he refused to mention the condition of his heart to anyone in Russia when it began to give him trouble late in 1959.

On November 6, 1958, a correspondent of the London *Daily Express* saw Pasternak, who said that he could not speak to him, adding: "You must wait a month—perhaps I could speak then." He said that he was pleased with the appearance of his letter in *Pravda*. "I feel it is a good time, a very good time, that it was published."

The Constituent Congress of Writers of the RSFSR was held on December 7–13, 1958. Several attacks were made on Pasternak, though again the theme was avoided by the more reputable writers. Surkov spoke of him as an "apostate our righteous wrath has driven from the honorable family of Soviet writers," condemned his "putrid internal émigré position" and referred to "the treacherous act of this *littérateur*." But he was also concerned about the fact that abroad the expulsion of Pasternak from the Union had "disoriented certain progressive writers." A. Timonen made the same point: "Certain of our sincere writer friends swallowed the bait of these newspapers and began to argue that literature and politics are different things. . . ."

[9] *The Times* (London), January 23, 1961.
[10] *Newsday*, December 22, 1958.

He gave as an example, though without naming her, a woman writer "who herself spent the whole war in prison for her democratic views and books."[11]

The speeches of S. U. Smirnov and A. Kovalenkov were particularly interesting. They revealed that at the Literary Institute a "cult of Pasternak" had sprung up. The two ringleaders, the nineteen- and twenty-year-old poets Kharabarov and Pankratov, had "hung a portrait of their idol in the hostel," had "secretly visited" him, and had obtained the manuscript of *Doctor Zhivago* and "acquainted their comrades with this work." As a result they had been expelled from the Komsomol and sent to Kazakhstan, but had come back and "again stealthily hastened to Pasternak's dacha." A speech by Alexander Zharov also mentioned trouble at the Literary Institute, citing a young poet who had, under Pasternak's influence, "learned to write such verses that they wanted to expel him from the Institute, and not without reason," though in this case they relented.

The overtly violent phase of the campaign against him now began to peter out. Nothing more was said of expulsion, and things seemed to have settled down to a slow grind of pressure from the Union of Writers and stubborn resistance from Pasternak. Though he disavowed all support and praise from outside the USSR that could be even remotely suspected of being political, he maintained his own views intact.

That he had not changed these as a result of these pressures may be seen from an interview he gave early in January:

> This is the Age of Technocracy. The technocrats want writers to be a sort of power for them.
>
> They want us to produce work which can be used for all kinds of social purposes, like so many radioactive isotopes.
>
> As I see it, the writer, the artist, cannot do this. His function is a different one. It is more like that of an accumulator.
>
> The writer is the Faust of modern society, the only surviving

[11] *Stenographic Report* of the Congress, Moscow, 1959.

individualist in a mass age. To his orthodox contemporaries he seems a semi-madman.

The Union of Soviet Writers would like me to go on my knees to them—but they will never make me.[12]

On February 11 the London *Daily Mail* published a short poem of Pasternak's, "The Nobel Prize," written at the height of the campaign against him in late October. In an interview he gave a few days later to the United Press International correspondent in Moscow, he said that the publication was unauthorized, and signed a statement to that effect. "Using unprintable words, Pasternak denounced the reporter and said that hereafter he will receive no more correspondents, 'who only hinder my work and cause harm.' "[13]

The reasons why his express instructions were apparently ignored have not been explained. But the incident certainly shows the troubles that beset a modest, yet frank, man, unused to being news, when suddenly exposed to great tensions and extreme publicity. His wish that the issue had remained a literary one is more understandable than ever. Meanwhile the poem itself, though its author said that it had been composed in a black mood, now over, and also felt that the last lines were open to misinterpretation, can be reproduced:

I am lost like a beast in a trap,
  Somewhere are people, freedom, light.
Behind me is the noise of pursuit
  And there is no way out for me.

Dark forest and shore of a pond,
  Trunk of a felled fir tree,
The path is blocked on every side,
  Come what may—it's all one.

But what wicked thing have I done,
  I, the murderer and villain?
I made the whole world weep
  Over my beautiful land.

[12] Alan Moray Williams in the *News Chronicle*, January 19, 1959.
[13] *New York Herald Tribune*, International Edition, February 14–15, 1959.

Even so, near the grave,
I believe the time will come
When the spirit of good will conquer
The power of malice and evil.

Condemnation of the Soviet actions was expressed strongly by writers, and the general public, throughout the world.

A group of leading English authors, including Graham Greene, J. B. Priestley, Bertrand Russell and others, signed a strong appeal to the Soviet Writers' Union in which they made the point that they consider *Doctor Zhivago* "not a political document."

The President and Secretary of the PEN International also sent a telegram demanding "protection for the poet by maintaining proper conditions for free literary creation." Literary societies throughout the world followed suit, from Mexico to India.

A useful booklet published in Calcutta (*Boris Pasternak*, edited by K. Sinha) prints a large number of comments by Indian writers and newspapers, expressing admiration for Pasternak and indignation at his persecutors. In Kerala, Shri P. Kesavadev, whom the Communists had earlier praised as "the Maxim Gorky of Kerala," was prominent in condemning the Soviet attitude.

A Yugoslav appeal (*Vidici*, October–November, 1958) ran:

In any case the nonliterary reasons why the Royal Swedish Academy gave its Nobel Prize to Boris Pasternak, and not, say, to Leonov or Sholokhov, are not important for us at this moment. Perhaps we can agree on one point. Boris Pasternak is a writer who deserves by his humanistic artistic work to stand in the first rank of world writers and to receive the world's most prized award.

I appeal to you, to your conscience, to ask yourself the reason for this inhuman witch hunt against an honorable man. Is it really necessary for Soviet people today to imagine enemies where there are none, in their own home? Will you really allow people to be gathered from the face of the Earth like mush-

rooms? Did you really applaud such disgusting, such primitive invectives with which one man, because he is praised by the other side, is pronounced a traitor, enemy, mangy sheep and pig?

The *Manchester Guardian* commented: "The Writers' Union which should have tried to protect a distinguished member has acted as if it was no better than a branch of the thought police."

But here again it would be pointless to repeat examples of the almost unanimous reaction of the world's writers and press. Even a few Communists, in a test of loyalty much more strict than a mere opinion about a book, expressed or hinted at their disagreement.

A personal telegram to Khrushchev from the Icelandic poet Halldor Laxness, himself holder both of a Nobel Prize and of a Lenin Peace Prize and long a sympathizer with Communism, asked the First Secretary to "mitigate the malicious onslaughts of sectarian intolerance upon an old meritorious Russian poet, Boris Pasternak." He spoke of the Russians rousing "the wrath of the world's poets, writers, intellectuals and Socialists against the Soviet Union" and concluded: "Kindly spare friends of the Soviet Union an incomprehensible and most unworthy spectacle."

An Indian Communist (Mohit Sen in *New Age*, November 23, 1958) wrote: "Personally one would wish that the language used by some personalities in the Soviet Union had been more temperate, and one may like to discuss and debate some of the resolutions passed there."

In a letter in the Indian press, a pro-Soviet writer of high repute, Mulk Raj Anand, gave a fair and moderate appraisal of the literary issue, and temperately stated a case for bias on the part of the Nobel Committee (mainly on the grounds that Laxness *nearly* didn't get the prize). But he also wrote (*Times of India*, January 26, 1959) unequivocally:

I do not think that there are many writers in the world who can abstain, in good conscience, from repudiating the resolution

of the Soviet Writers' Union in deciding not to publish the book and to expel Pasternak from the membership. Certainly, I would like to record my dissent with the point of view expressed by the Soviet Writers' Union. I feel that if a book, howsoever critical it may be of a particular régime, is not published, it can hardly be criticised by those who have not read it. And, as for the abuse hurled on Pasternak in a television programme by the young Communist leader who called him "a pig who had fouled the place he lives in," such vulgarity is undignified by any standards.

The Brazilian novelist, Jorge Amado, hitherto regarded as the doyen of Brazilian pro-Communist literary men, congratulated Pasternak and condemned his expulsion from the Soviet Writers' Union as proof that sectarian and dogmatic elements ran that body, as in Stalin's time (*Ultima Hora*, October 30, 1958).

The Austrian Communist organ commented on the demand of the Soviet Writers' Union that Pasternak be deprived of his citizenship, that this was "doubtless an exaggeration not in keeping with the Party and government attitude" (*Volksstimme*, November 4, 1958).

To protest, even by implication, against a Soviet campaign is notoriously unwise in these circles. But we may conclude with a truly authoritative statement of free opinion. At his press conference in New Delhi on November 7, 1958, Mr. Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister, said that the Russian approach to Pasternak "pained us somewhat because it is entirely opposed to our approach to such questions. A noted writer, even if he expresses an opinion opposed to the dominating opinion, according to us should be respected and it should be given free play."

IX

DEATH IN DISGRACE

In the spring and summer of 1959 no more was said publicly by the Soviet authorities or their spokesmen about Pasternak and *Doctor Zhivago*. At the same time reassuring reports that his more extreme opponents had to some extent been thwarted began to be put about. Meanwhile, Pasternak himself was extremely reserved in what he said to visitors of unknown reliability. The impression gained ground in circles which had raised their voices against persecution of the poet that the Soviet government had had second, and better, thoughts.

It was even rumored that *Doctor Zhivago* might eventually be printed in the USSR, in a slightly censored version.[1] It was hinted that Khrushchev had personally concluded that token publication of a very small edition of this sort would have caused the USSR less trouble in the first place than the original suppression. This opinion is supposed to have been reached after an investigation had reported that the main persecutors of Pasternak had acted unwisely. And it is at least true that several of the literary extremists, such as Surkov and V. A. Kochetov, were deprived of some of their powers at this time—Surkov being replaced as First Secretary of the Writers' Union by Fedin. The literary magazines began to publish works by comparatively liberal writers. Evtushenko gave a recitation in the autumn in which he included poems which had been cen-

[1] E.g., Harrison Salisbury in the *New York Times*, September 12, 1959.

sured in 1957. In January, 1960, *Novy Mir* printed Dudintsev's *New Year Fable*, a work in any case contrary to all principles of socialist realism, and most easily interpretable as hostile to the bureaucracy. Significantly enough, Tvardovsky, explaining why the magazine printed it, said that they "did not want to make a martyr of Dudintsev."

Ilya Ehrenburg was allowed to defend a not entirely orthodox position in the literary papers. Later, Ehrenburg is even described as having spoken in these terms when asked at a meeting of Moscow University students his opinion of Pasternak and *Doctor Zhivago*:

> Clearly betraying contempt for the way the Pasternak case was handled here, Mr. Ehrenburg replied he disliked discussing a novel his listeners had not had a chance to read. He said they had nothing to go on except what Moscow's *Literaturnaya Gazeta* told them of the case a few days after the Nobel Award had been made. This account, he implied, was by no means the whole story. Emphasizing that Mr. Pasternak is a "very great poet," Mr. Ehrenburg said that he finds *Doctor Zhivago* a "distressing" book. He did not say why.[2]

A slight appearance of *détente* affected Pasternak himself. On September 11, 1959, he reappeared in public for the first time since the Nobel controversy, at the final concert in the New York Philharmonic's tour of the USSR. Not that he was optimistic. The *New York Times* correspondent, Max Frankel, reported (September 12, 1959):

> Mr. Pasternak disclosed later that he was working on a play about the liberation of Russian serfs in the eighteen-sixties. He hopes to complete it within six months, he said, but added: "It will not be any more happy for me personally than my novel."
>
> He was in good health and living comfortably, but he said of *Doctor Zhivago* that "he did not believe that it would be published in the foreseeable future."

[2] *New York Times*, March 10, 1960.

The reference to the evidently unorthodox play shows that he was still stubbornly putting forward his own ideas. In his conversation with Mrs. Olga Carlisle in January, 1960, he described this work as a trilogy called *The Blind Beauty*. The "blind beauty" is a peasant girl, but Pasternak noted that: "The title is, of course, symbolic of Russia, oblivious for so long of its own beauty and its own destinies."

Pasternak talked of the plays at some length. But he confined himself largely to the action, which has (as he put it) a certain melodramatic flavor, as in Hugo or Schiller.

Mrs. Carlisle comments:

It was typical of Pasternak to tell me about his plays in concrete terms, like a libretto. He didn't emphasize the ideas behind the trilogy though it became apparent, after a while, that he was absorbed in ideas about art—not in its historical context, but as an element ever present in life.

He described the plan of the plays as follows:

My trilogy deals with three meaningful moments in the long process of liberating the serfs. The first play takes place in 1840 —that is, when unrest caused by serfdom is first felt throughout the country. The old feudal system is outlived but no tangible hope is yet to be seen for Russia. The second one deals with the eighteen-sixties. Liberal landowners have appeared and the best among Russian aristocrats begin to be deeply stirred by Western ideas. Unlike the first two plays, which are set in a great country estate, the third part will take place in St. Petersburg in the eighteen-eighties.

He commented generally: "The first play describes life at its rawest, most trivial, in the manner of the first part of *Dead Souls*. It is existence before it has been touched by any form of spirituality." And he summarized the ideas behind the third and final piece: "Essentially, what I want to show at the end of the trilogy is just that: the birth of an enlightened and affluent middle class, open to occidental influences, progressive, intelligent, artistic. . . ."

The manuscript of this work is a matter of legitimate interest to the world literary public, and it evidently played an important part in the events which followed the poet's death.

Pasternak told Mrs. Carlisle: "Although they will be long, I hope that they can be played in one evening." But this was with cuts at the discretion of the producer, a procedure of which he approved. When he saw Mrs. Carlisle in January, 1960, he said that he had then written one-third of the trilogy, adding: "The first and second plays are partially written," and that the third part "is but a project yet."

When Schewe visited Pasternak in March, 1960, the poet showed him a 175-page manuscript of the plays' progress to date.[3]

Thus, though the state of completeness of the work at the time of Pasternak's death is uncertain, it is plain that there is solid and important material awaiting release. Besides this, Olga Ivinskaya is believed to have been preparing an edition of his correspondence.

On September 30, 1959, he was seen by a Quaker, Mr. Jhan Robbins, who after his death published a short account of the meeting in the *New York Herald Tribune* (August 7, 1960). Outside the house in Peredelkino was a sign saying: "Journalists and others, please go away. I am busy," and the visitor was only admitted with reluctance. Pasternak said to Mr. Robbins:

"Do people buy *Doctor Zhivago* because it is a good book or only because they think it is anti-Communist? He is a literary victim of the cold war. Every country, whether Communist or not Communist, has its quota of Dr. Zhivagos. Read it again and try to see it that way." This is an interesting comment, implying that the book is inherently critical of all regimes—that is, not so much withdrawing its implications about the Communist order as putting it forward once again as transcending the political.

By the autumn of 1959 Pasternak knew that his health was

[3] *Corriere della Sera*, August 2, 1960.

getting worse, but concealed the fact, in order not to become an invalid controlled by doctors and sympathizers. In a letter dated November 17, 1959, he wrote of "now and then a disturbance on the left side of my breast. I am telling no one about it, as if I do mention it I shall have to give up my habitual daily routine."[4]

This old and sick man, stubbornly laboring at his last work, was under frightful pressures. The adversaries who, after his death, were to try to blur and misrepresent his own attitude and to pile squalor upon the grandeur, were still working implacably against him and his friends.

The impression of comparative calm that prevailed over this period was a false one. The truth was that things had become so bad that the poet, while speaking and writing frankly about it to his acquaintances, had to beg them to say nothing of his plight for fear of making it worse—worse, too, not only for himself, but also for those not protected as he was by his reputation, and whose fate after his death was to show the implacable meanness of his enemies.

During this period of apparent serenity he was writing: "It continues in all its strictness. My situation is worse, more unbearable and endangered than I can say or you can think of."[5]

Worse than Pasternak, who had lived through the *Yezhovshchina* and the *Zhdanovshchina*, could say! And this is typical of many letters and remarks which could not be quoted at the time. It will be seen that Spender did not feel that he could publish this one until after Pasternak's death. But even now a good deal of what Pasternak told his friends has not been made public. As Edward Crankshaw says:

One day his letters, sometimes almost recklessly indiscreet, to his friends outside Russia will be published. They will be read with distress and a profound sense of outrage that a good man

[4] *New York Times*, February 4, 1961.
[5] Letter, in English, to Stephen Spender, dated August 9, 1959, in *Encounter*, August, 1960.

should be made to suffer such humiliation and agony of soul. Don't believe all you hear of me, he said over and over again; they are closing in on me, and I shall come to a bad end. He was, indeed, hounded to death.[6]

The main weapon the authorities had against Pasternak was the hint that reprisals would be taken against Olga Ivinskaya:

Fear for her welfare became an obsession of his last years. This was precisely the intention of the authorities, for though he was shielded from direct molestation by his international fame it was possible to harass him effectively in this way. He conveyed to his friends in the West his fear that after his death she would be re-arrested.[7]

Edward Crankshaw in *The Observer* quotes a letter from the poet shortly before his death:

If, God forbid, they should arrest Olga, I will send you a telegram saying that someone has caught scarlet fever. In that event, all tocsins should ring, just as would have been done in my own case, for an attack on her is in fact a blow at me.

In another letter he had written, "she and her children are a kind of hostage for me."[8]

Pasternak's forebodings were only too well justified.

[6] *The Observer* (London), January 22, 1961.
[7] Dr. Ronald Hingley in the *Sunday Times* (London), January 22, 1961.
[8] *Sunday Telegraph* (London), February 5, 1961.

X

OLGA IVINSKAYA

SIX WEEKS AFTER THE POET HAD DIED without the recantation which might have disarmed his adversaries, a French student, M. Nivat, to whom Olga Ivinskaya's daughter Irina Yemelianova had become engaged, was refused a renewal of his visa, and he left the USSR on August 10, 1960. Olga Ivinskaya was arrested the following week, and her daughter in early September—perhaps as an inducement to her mother to be more co-operative. They were, it was later learned, tried on December 7, and sentenced to terms of eight and three years respectively. They were sent to Siberia on December 12.

Such, at least, is the course of events as unofficial Soviet sources have recounted it in the West. There is no clear official account.

The decision to arrest Mrs. Ivinskaya must have been taken in June or July. It was just at this time that Khrushchev was putting a tough line on literature, in a speech given to writers of the Russian Republic on July 17, 1960. The full text was not published until May, 1961, when *Kommunist* (No. 7) printed it. Khrushchev recalled the meeting of 1957 when he had hectored the writers for "last year's errors." He said that the "thunder and lightning" of that time had been beneficial: "It is better to warn a man in sharp terms and at the right time than tolerate his erroneous views and wrong actions which, if treated liberally, could have serious consequences."

This threat was supported by a restatement of the Party view of literature:

In the great historical movement toward Communism one should put into motion all the levers and transmission belts, all the kinds of spiritual weapons, and use them in such a way that they should operate without fail as a single mechanism. . . . The development of literature and art in a socialist society proceeds not in an elemental, not in an anarchic way, but planwise as directed by the Party, and is considered as an important component of the all-national effort. . .

Such was the mood in which the authorities faced the problem of Pasternak's unpublished work and its devoted protector.

When the trial and sentence became known, several Western writers, including Bertrand Russell and Graham Greene, sent unpublicized appeals in the hope that the Russians would realize the extremely bad effect such actions were bound to have even on people of whose political attitudes they themselves had approved and could repudiate the trial without loss of face.

It speaks well for the discretion of the many in Western Europe who knew of these letters that the first publicity came from the Soviet side.

In the middle of January a spokesman of Goslitizdat, the State Literary Publishing House, told a British reporter that Mrs. Ivinskaya had been selling verse translations to them at a profit, having had young students do the actual work—evidently a reference to her obtaining prose translations of poems from languages she did not herself know. He added:

We have broken off all connection with Ivinskaya. Our Managing Director is very angry with her. In 1959 she delivered 15,000 lines of rhymed verse earning her about 150,000 roubles . . . no one person could translate so much poetry in one year.[1] It is probable that legal action will be taken against her.[2]

[1] Yet the French poet Charles Péguy wrote 15,000 original lines in three months.

[2] *Daily Herald* (London), January 17, 1961.

This first public statement, with all its inadequacy, made further privacy impossible; in fact, it seemed designed to do just that, and to amount to a declaration of irreconcilability on the issue. Outside the Soviet Union there was a storm of protest, which resulted in a statement on Radio Moscow's foreign services.

In broadcasts on the night of January 21, they violently accused Olga Ivinskaya and her daughter of currency offenses in connection with the royalties on *Doctor Zhivago*. At the same time, they charged her not merely with breaking the law in this way, but also with deceiving Pasternak for reasons of personal profit. This was in accord with a whispering campaign which had been started in Moscow the previous year, representing her as an evil influence on Pasternak and responsible for the anti-Soviet attitudes of his later life. The entire broadcast is given as Appendix VIII. It was followed, on January 27, by another—also confined to the foreign services—which made further points. This is given as Appendix IX.

The broadcasts call for some comment. (On their major points, that is: some of the lesser allegations—in particular those about Irina's personal relations with various Westerners—are only worth noting as examples of the tone and taste which prevailed among Soviet commentators on the case. Many of the statements about the foreigners involved, which are equally offensive, are also known to be untrue.) In the first place, the first broadcast (which was in English) translates misleadingly the parts it gives of Feltrinelli's letter. Copies of the letter (written in German) were circulated by Adzhubei on his 1961 visit to England. The documents are not referred to as "secret" but "*vertraulichen*"—confidential. The last sentence of what the broadcast gives as his Point 3 should read: "I shall always see to it that a substantial (*substanzieller*) part of the profit will be left over for you or Irina." A minor point perhaps but an indicative one.

As the *New Statesman and Nation* pointed out, allegations of

currency and similar offenses can be brought against almost anyone the authorities wish to prosecute. Even if the offense was committed as stated, the interpretation Soviet spokesmen have attempted to put on it can be shown to be untenable. And this in turn speaks against the equitable handling of the trial itself.

The trial may have been open in some technical sense, but it was not announced, and no foreigners or others interested in Mrs. Ivinskaya seem to have heard of it or to have been able to attend it.

Moreover, it is clear that no attempt was made to obtain foreign evidence relevant to the accusations. It is not known what these were in detail except from the accounts on Radio Moscow, which do not distinguish between general abuse and allegations of breaches of the law. But it is certain, for example, that Signor Feltrinelli's evidence about the circumstances in which the sums were supposedly sent to the USSR would have been sought in any properly impartial investigation. It was only after the publicity on the radio that Feltrinelli issued a statement, as follows:

With regard to the case of Mrs. Ivinskaya's relations with the Russian writer, Boris Pasternak, the publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli made the following statement this evening:

"A campaign has recently developed in the Western press about the sad events which have occurred to Mrs. Ivinskaya, which has resulted in a tangle of conjectures, hypotheses and deductions.

"As Boris Pasternak's publisher I have preferred hitherto to refrain from making any statement, because I maintain that controversy in this matter does not help the persons involved in the case—not even the late author's family. So gross, however, are the inaccuracies reported by the most varied sources, that it is my duty to state today a fact of which I am personally aware.

"I myself know that the 100,000 dollars, converted entirely or in part into roubles and transmitted to Moscow, came from funds at the disposal of Boris Pasternak in the West. The amount in question was withdrawn on a written order in the

author's own hand, dated December 6, 1959. This order arrived in the West in March, 1960.

"The bearer of this communication, which I saw with my own eyes, was the same person whom the author designated as the one to whom the sum should be entrusted. I know that the sum was duly withdrawn on March 10, 1960. These are the facts. As for the delay of some months between the date of withdrawal and consignment to Moscow, I maintain this was due as much to the understandable difficulty which Pasternak's emissary experienced in finding the rouble equivalent, as to the actual transfer of the currency.

"In conclusion, it is my opinion that Olga Ivinskaya is not responsible either for the transfer of the sum or for its eventual destination. In the first place the transfer order was given, I repeat, by Pasternak himself; secondly, it was Pasternak himself who wished that the sum converted into roubles should be sent, without distinction, either to himself or to Mrs. Ivinskaya.

"Nor can one rule out that the wish of the author was, in fact, to consider Olga Ivinskaya as his heiress. I trust therefore that the Soviet judicial authorities will take into account the circumstances which I have related, which are all confirmed by irrefutable documents."[3]

Signor Sergio D'Angelo, who acted as Feltrinelli's agent in the financial dealings with Pasternak, has also given his relevant evidence. He says:

I acted entirely on Pasternak's instructions. Olga Ivinskaya had, as far as I know, nothing to do with the decision, and I doubt whether she knew at the time that he had told me to go ahead. In any case, she bore no responsibility for what followed.[4]

D'Angelo adds, no doubt truly enough, that both Pasternak and Ivinskaya were being far too closely watched for any transfer to go undetected, concluding that the Soviet police knew what was going on but chose to hold their hands until after Pasternak was dead.

Pasternak had considered having money transferred officially, but wrote in a letter to D'Angelo:

[3] *Avanti*, January 28, 1961.
[4] *Sunday Telegraph* (London), May 7, 1961.

I just don't know. It is being suggested to me that there should be official transfers of moneys. But I am not sure that there is not a trap concealed here to finish me off for certain (so great is the desire always to stifle me that I see nothing but this desire as far as I am concerned), moreover always with the implication that they have prepared something nice for me but just didn't manage to finish it, and that I've spoilt everything again and it's again impossible to come to terms—just think what cheap baseness! So in the reply to the proposal to make official transfers of money I have so far decided nothing.

In fact Pasternak's objection to official transfers seems to have been that they would inevitably involve him in petty blackmailing by the bureaucracy. His decision to get the money direct seems to have been based on the perfectly sound supposition that if the authorities were determined to arrest him and his friends they would do so anyhow, while if, for reasons of political calculation, they had decided to leave them free, they would turn a blind eye to breaches of their regulations. This was a realistic estimate of the circumstances, in which political calculation was the main force, with the rule of law nowhere.

It appears from these statements—and, indeed, from inherent probability—that the Soviet line is entirely untrue in major points. If a currency offense has been committed, it is clear that it is impossible to absolve Pasternak and put the blame on Olga Ivinskaya. Anything done was done on his instructions. He had told a correspondent, Mr. B. Nielsen-Stokkeby: "I cannot afford to receive money from abroad officially. If I did, that agitation against me would flare up again."[5] Mr. Nielsen-Stokkeby adds that money had been sent to Olga Ivinskaya's credit, "at the express wish of Pasternak." And, consistently with his attitude to her expressed in the letters to his friends, he regarded anything sent her as being in effect sent to him. Thus it is clear that Signor Feltrinelli operated under Pasternak's instructions, and if he or an intermediary sent money illegally to Pasternak, it was under the impression that he was fulfilling these. He

[5] Reuters, January 25, 1961.

may indeed have misunderstood them. But in any case the primary guilt, such as it is, can be only with the Italian operators and perhaps Pasternak himself. Yet only Ivinskaya, at most an accessory, has been arrested.

The alleged secrecy of the meetings with foreigners is perfectly explicable in terms of the persecution she and the poet had already undergone for officially disapproved, though perfectly explicable in terms of the persecution she and the poet does not seem proved to have been known to her. It may have been; but foreigners with blocked accounts in Russia had already given Pasternak money. As to the legal provisions under which, according to Radio Moscow, the two women were charged, Article 17 of the Principles of the Penal Codes simply defines complicity, and the fact that it was not used against Mrs. Ivinskaya implies that she was treated as a principal. Article 15 of the Law on Crimes Against the State, under which the substantive accusation was made, covers "Smuggling, that is the illegal transfer of goods or other valuables across the State border of the USSR, carried out by hiding articles in special containers, or by a fraudulent use of customs or other documents . . . and equally the smuggling of explosives, narcotics, virulent and poisonous substances, weapons and military supplies" and nothing else. This was clearly not intended for currency offenses (which are dealt with in Article 25), and it seems doubtful if the import of roubles was then covered by the regulations.

The Radio's going out of its way to refer to Irina Yemelianova as a former student at the Literary Institute may be a hint that her real offense, apart from her general closeness to Pasternak, was involvement in the literary opposition there. As we have seen, in 1958 this showed itself in a 'cult' of the poet, circulation of the manuscript of *Doctor Zhivago*, and clandestine visits to his house. It seems very probable that Miss Yemelianova was connected with this activity.

Pasternak's most compelling motive in trying to provide the two women with gifts of money was that, under Soviet law,

he was unable to leave them anything. The bulk of his royalties were to go to his own family and to various scholarships.

There is much hearsay evidence circulating in the West about the exact circumstances of Pasternak's monetary arrangements. These vary in detail to some extent and are also immensely complicated.

What seems agreed by all who know the circumstances is that Pasternak, in a difficult and dangerous situation and uncertain of what foreigners he could rely on, became reckless and paid little attention to the counsels of prudence which Mrs. Ivinskaya consistently gave him. Even if everyone acted in good faith, the poet was not used to the subterfuges and discretions which come as second nature to political conspirators and members of secret police organizations.

The Radio's statement that Pasternak intended to adopt Irina, though he had not yet been able to do so, shows both the relationship of trust prevailing between them, and the likelihood that he would in fact wish to give her financial help. It also indicates how vulnerable he must have been to threats directed at her, as well as her mother, and adds sharpness to the horror of his reaction to the proposal to expel him from the country, which would have been, apart from anything else, to leave them to their fate. When he did so leave them in another way, the result justified such fears. (It may be noted, incidentally, that it had been Stalin's practice, which Surkov and others must have remembered, to strike at his opponents through their children and after their death to persist in his persecution of their orphans.)

The reference in both the broadcasts to Feltrinelli's desire to get Pasternak's manuscripts to the West may reflect an important motive of the Soviet authorities. They have consistently shown themselves as wishing to be in a position to suppress or censor Pasternak at will. And they may regard it as important to prevent, in particular, the publication of his new, unorthodox play outside Russia. To make safe safer, to remove his fearless

literary executor, and to put all his manuscripts in the hands of a committee answerable to the government, would, on this view, be a major objective. And if, as seems possible, some manuscripts have already reached the outside world, Ivinskaya could be penalized and, at the same time, held as a hostage against publication.

The attempt to portray Olga Ivinskaya as a false and mercenary friend may also be tested against the fact that she had already suffered torture and imprisonment for his sake, and also against the deep and sensitive picture of her as Lara which Pasternak created after years of friendship. M. Nivat commented that it was "unthinkable" that she had deceived the poet. He added: "Furthermore, knowing the relationship between Boris Pasternak and Madame Ivinskaya, I know that she would never have done anything without the initiative coming from him."[6]

One thing that becomes clear immediately is that, regardless of the truth or otherwise of the actual criminal accusations, Radio Moscow finds not the slightest evidence to support its charge that she had used, or intended to use, the money for her private advantage.

The view was put forward in letters written to certain Western newspapers, such as *The Times* of London, that in the Soviet Union trial must automatically follow on any breach of the law, as is the case in some other countries. This must be rejected. To take a single example, involving crimes far worse than those alleged against Mrs. Ivinskaya: a number of fallen politicians have been clearly and specifically accused of offenses against the law, without coming to trial. Members of the present Praesidium have themselves made definite allegations: Shvernik referred to "Violations of revolutionary legality committed by Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov in the period of mass repressions" (*Pravda*, July 7, 1957). Khrushchev called Malenkov "one of the chief organizers of the so-called Leningrad

[6] *Irish News*, January 25, 1961.

Case," which is officially described as a frame-up in which many innocent Communists lost their lives (*Pravda*, July 7, 1957). Kozlov referred to "crude violations of revolutionary legality committed by Kaganovich" (*Leningradskaya Pravda*, July 5, 1957).

Moreover, the State's chief legal officer, Rudenko, the Procurator General, himself spoke of "these dissidents, especially Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, Bulganin, having themselves committed crude arbitrariness and criminal violations of socialist legality" (*Pravda*, December 26, 1958).

Yet all those named still hold well-paid posts, and have never faced a court. Nor, alternatively, have their accusers been prosecuted for criminal libel.

Even in the Ivinskaya case itself, it will be seen that only the two Russian women, who at most received the money, were prosecuted, while foreigners who actually transferred the sums without official permission were not—not even M. Nivat, who Radio Moscow alleges was caught *in flagrante delicto* by the customs.

In fact trials with any political significance of any sort are proceeded with or not as the result of a political decision. With Mrs. Ivinskaya, as Surkov's remarks (see below) and the line taken in the broadcasts make clear, the trial is only part of a more general political-cultural decision. In view of the importance of the matter, and its international aspect, it seems unlikely that such a decision could have been taken at a level lower than the type of meeting described in Chapter V, involving Suslov, Pospelov and members of the Science and Culture Department of the Central Committee, and possibly higher still.

The next public move made in Moscow in connection with the case was an interview given by Surkov to various local correspondents of the Western Communist press. He is reported as saying:

It is simply a question of illegal dealing in foreign exchange and this had nothing to do with Pasternak. I have seen the Public Prosecutor and the judges. They sentenced Olga Ivinskaya to eight years' imprisonment and her daughter Irina to three years: they had illegally received sums of 300,000 and 500,000 roubles. I have received letters and telegrams on this subject, from Graham Greene in particular . . . I replied giving the true facts and expressing surprise: What, you intervene and demand the liberation of rogues of whom you know nothing? Now this is really a question of an illegal currency deal and is not connected with Pasternak who was a great poet. His family, it must be said, has nothing to do with this sordid story. All these rumors offend the writer's memory. If people abroad wish to respect his memory then they should not stir up mud around him, just because among his friends there was an adventuress. We do not want to interfere in this affair because it has nothing to do with politics or with literature.

Russians, asked why anyone would want to attack Boris Pasternak through his friends, reply: In fact exactly the opposite happened. It was the Writers' Union which made itself responsible for Pasternak's funeral. Last year the State Publishing House published a collection of his translations from Shakespeare and Goethe. Dozens of theaters have put on his translations of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*. A literary committee was formed a month after the poet's death to arrange for the publication of his work of which all Russians are very fond, especially that part written before October and which represents his most beautiful poems. The chairman of this committee is Konstantin Fedin who was himself a very close friend of Pasternak and with him are Vsevolod Ivanov and Tamara Ivanova, as well as the poet's widow, Zinaida Pasternak.[7]

This evidently reflects a decision of which Surkov was simply the spokesman—a selection which seems to imply that writers with less strong stomachs were not prepared to associate themselves publicly with the action now being taken. (In passing, it may be asked why, if Mrs. Ivinskaya's offense is not regarded as political, it is being handled by the KGB—the State Security authorities—and not the ordinary police of the MVD.)

[7] *Humanité*, January 24, 1961.

The new attitude to Pasternak, coupled with the trial of Ivinskaya, made up a general proposition: that Pasternak had written reputably until he had, in his dotage, fallen into the hands of an adventuress who had provoked or lured him into excesses not representative of his normal talent and opinions. The advantage of such a line is that it would make it possible to write off the works of his last years—or perhaps even produce a bowdlerized edition of *Doctor Zhivago*—and thus retreat from the awkward position of total hostility to a writer whose books are stubbornly regarded by the great majority in Soviet literary circles as among the best Russian works of the epoch. If such a plan is taken as being afoot, the removal of Olga Ivinskaya becomes particularly necessary, as it is impossible to imagine her becoming a party to a literary maneuver of the sort, while at the same time it was impossible to deny her closeness to and influence with Pasternak. The solution, to blame her for the aberrations, to transfer to her the writer's literary and monetary guilts, ties things up nicely, and leaves matters in the hands of a more amenable committee. That two women, one a young girl, should be inequitably condemned to years of misery is not perhaps a point that would appear as more than incidental to Surkov and those who think like him.

As to Surkov's remark about Graham Greene's "knowing nothing" about the Ivinskaya case, one is reminded of Khrushchev's remark about Stalin's handling of the "Doctors' Plot": "The case was so presented that no one could verify the facts on which the investigation was based. There was no possibility of trying to verify the facts by contacting those who had made the confessions of guilt."[8] This did not mean that those without access to the facts were wrong and those with access right: on the contrary! (Khrushchev adds that his doubts of the doctors' guilt were aroused, in spite of the legalities and confessions, by his knowledge of their characters. And ours by Pasternak's knowledge of Ivinskaya's, among other things!)

[8] *Confidential Report* to the Twentieth Party Congress.

The Surkov line was not a success, even in the USSR.

In *Novy Mir* of February, 1961, Ehrenburg published a section of his memoirs in which he gives his impressions of the Russian writers of his time. Of Pasternak he says: "I loved him and I love his poetry . . . you cannot bury these verses—they live!"

He criticizes him only for not understanding the political tendencies of his times: "He heard the beating of the heart, the growing of the grass but the movement of the century he did not perceive."

Of *Doctor Zhivago* Ehrenburg says that it contains: "many striking passages on nature and on love but also too many passages devoted to things others did not see and did not hear"—though here Ehrenburg seems to be referring as much to people's behavior as to the political theme. In writing the book, in any case, Pasternak had "no intention of damaging our country"; in fact, Ehrenburg adds,

> He was only guilty of being Pasternak . . . he did not suspect that they would have made of his book a political sensation in bad taste, and that this stroke would inevitably be followed by a counterstroke.

It will be seen that Ehrenburg does not take the present official line. He is critical, though not offensively so, of the errors he sees in *Doctor Zhivago*—and even here it would be hard to read into this any approval for the suppression of the book. But he makes Pasternak, though without any evil intent, responsible for them. They result precisely from Pasternak's "being Pasternak." The shoddy melodrama of the influence of the evil adventuress is simply ignored.

Here, as in so many other cases, it becomes plain that civilization and decency are not matters of political belief or attachment to one or another idea of the correct organization of society. The division is not between Communist and non-Communist, but between humanist and *apparatchik*. What colloquy is possible there? What appeal can bridge that gap?

One was soon attempted.

In February, 1961, Mr. Alexey Adzhubei, editor of *Izvestia*, and son-in-law of Khrushchev, came to Britain (together with Surkov, Mr. Georgi Zhukov and others) on a delegation to a conference on "peaceful co-existence," organized by the Great Britain-USSR Association. He brought a set of documents supposedly proving Mrs. Ivinskaya's guilt, and attempted to get a number of leading British newspapers to publish these. He wanted them published "without any comment whatsoever,"[9] and complained of censorship when this was not found acceptable—though, as British journalists pointed out to him, the documents had not been published, nor the case referred to, in the papers of the USSR itself! The documents consisted of:

a) Photographs of bundles of Russian banknotes;
b) Photographs of Italian banknotes cut in two;
c) A photostat of a letter in German said to have been sent to Mrs. Ivinskaya by Signor Feltrinelli;
d) A confession written by Mrs. Ivinskaya in the Investigation Section of the Committee of State Security.

As the London press pointed out, these documents did nothing in themselves to substantiate the charges against Olga Ivinskaya, and "would not be accepted as evidence in support of charges in any Western court of law" (*Daily Telegraph*). The letter from Feltrinelli had already been reproduced in its main points by Radio Moscow. The confession, however, was new, and ran as follows:

In the Investigation Department
KGB

STATEMENT

of the accused

Ivinskaya, O. V.

Everything in the accusation is the essential truth. For my part I dispute none of it. (Perhaps with the exception of details about which I myself may have become confused owing to my

[9] *Daily Telegraph* (London), February 24, 1961.

nervous condition.) On the other hand, I wish to thank the investigator for his tact and correctness, not only in connection with me, but also with my archives, which have been carefully sorted, part of them returned to me, part delivered to the literat. archive, and nothing which I wanted to preserve destroyed.

O. IVINSKAYA

4/xi 1960

Although there is no formal reason for regarding it as proven to be genuine, we need not be so rigorous as not to treat it as such. That it appears to be in Olga Ivinskaya's writing is not enormously convincing either way. But the content is so inept for the purposes of an official propaganda operation, and so strongly implies other views inadequately compromised under pressure, that we may take it as authentic, at least tentatively.

The first thing to remember, in this case, is that it represents a draft acceptable, if only barely, to the Security Police. But although it is so in form, it is remarkable how little is actually conceded. The reservation about "details" shows, even after two months of pressure, refusal to confirm some of the particulars alleged against her or her friends. The reference to her nervous condition adequately implies the horrible circumstances in which she found herself.

The compliments to the interrogators are similar to those paid at their trials by the great political prisoners of the 'thirties. In the 'forties the barren formality of such statements was made clear when a number of those condemned in the Eastern European states were rehabilitated and substituted for their original denials in dock that any harm had been done them, accounts of the tortures they had actually suffered. But to say that such statements are meaningless does not imply that they may not happen to be more or less true in a given case. And it would be reasonable to suppose that the KGB had been ordered to handle the matter with what are, by its standards, kid-glove methods, owing to the interest and revulsion felt for the case in literary

circles in Moscow as well as abroad. To alienate important writers even more than had been done by the mere fact of trial and sentence might appear a mistake.

Nevertheless we may feel that two months of interrogation incommunicado is likely to build up sufficient tensions in any woman to produce the nervous state she speaks of. And if the document does not go far to substantiate later Soviet allegations, it is still a general admission of guilt, presumably for the currency offenses proper. And, on the other issues, it is not a declaration of the Ivinskaya-Pasternak position, but only a hint at it. We may feel it to be a brave and intelligent compromise on Ivinskaya's part. It is not difficult to imagine what were the pressures on her. In the first place, her young daughter's fate, as well as her own, depended to some extent on her attitude. And there remained the other members of her family.

Yet it is clear that there was another and at least equally important consideration in Ivinskaya's lonely struggle with the KGB—her responsibility for Pasternak's unpublished manuscripts. It is difficult to interpret what she writes about her "archives" with any certainty (and the hint that at least some documents may have been destroyed is disturbing), but at any rate it shows the unquenchable concern with which she regarded the irreplaceable literature which had been her charge. It can perhaps be read as a formal registering of assurances she had obtained from the authorities in return for her confession. If it is argued that such assurances can hardly be thought of as reliably binding, still, it was the very best she could do. That the authorities now publish the confession with these details may also be a comparatively favorable sign—that they are at least not contemplating actually destroying the unpublished work of Pasternak.

It is clear that, in any case, Olga Ivinskaya's motives have been grossly misrepresented. As to the Soviet account of her actions, we can at any rate say that there is at present no reason to attach any particular credence to it, in the absence of her

side of the story. As another Nobel Prize winner, W. B. Yeats, said on a comparable occasion:

> But who is there to argue that
> Now Pearse is deaf and dumb?

Pearse was dead and Olga Ivinskaya is only imprisoned, but —except for this brief cry selected by her persecutors—she is just as unable to communicate. Nor is the prognosis of survival in the case of an eight-year term in a labor camp, particularly for those against whom the State has shown special malice, very reassuring—and Mrs. Ivinskaya is no longer a young woman. Many people, reading of the sentence, were reminded of the fate of the fictional Lara:

> One day Lara went out and did not come back. She must have been arrested in the street, as so often happened in those days, and she died or vanished somewhere, forgotten as a nameless number on a list which was afterwards mislaid, in one of the innumerable mixed or women's concentration camps in the north.

But Olga Ivinskaya was victimized in a Russia which has supposedly abandoned the Stalinist inhumanities. If we are to draw a general conclusion, it must be that the ruling bureaucracy has no true objection, apart from an occasional feeling of inexpediency, to this sort of thing. We recall the revealing statement of one of them, the Assistant Procurator General of the USSR, Kudryavtsev, in 1957: "If it becomes necessary we will restore the old methods. But I think it will not be necessary."[10]

Such attitudes, far from indicating moral revulsion, explicitly put the interests of the authorities above good and evil. The fate of Olga Ivinskaya shows how these views work out in practice. And yet, we can hope that protest may touch, if not any humanitarian feeling, at least the sense of the balance of political advantage, and that the ruling party may feel that it has the more to gain by not further damaging its image in the world,

[10] Professor Harold Berman, "Soviet Law Reform," *Yale Law Journal*, vol. 66, No. 8.

and with its own intelligentsia, by persisting with its persecution of this "remarkable woman." For—even though the briefing of such a figure as Adzhubei to influence the British press is a sign that protest has not been without effect—it hardly seems possible that these authorities can yet fully realize the hatred and contempt into which such actions inevitably bring them, even among those friendlily disposed to them. These were shown, as we have seen, at the time of the initial outburst against the Nobel award, and are bound to be even more strongly aroused by what commentators everywhere have described as the cruel and contemptible persecution of a great writer to, and now beyond, the grave.

Meanwhile we may feel that, even in death and disgrace, the moral victory is with Pasternak and Olga Ivinskaya, and that in the long run such victories are usually the more effective. Pasternak's own life and work were based on such a view.

CONCLUSION

THE MATERIAL ASSEMBLED IN THIS BOOK forms a reasonably coherent picture. On the other hand, anyone who wishes to deny the pattern into which the evidence seems to fall may at least find that assembling it in this way is a useful contribution to the controversy.

As to the view that readers outside the Soviet Union have no right to concern themselves with these matters, we may suitably end with a remark of Ignazio Silone's:

All of us knew, in discussing the Pasternak affair, that we were not arbitrarily interfering in the internal affairs of a foreign country. Pasternak is our colleague; he belongs to us as much as to the Russians; he is part of what Goethe called *Weltliteratur*. The boundary-less society of artists and free men has thus felt outraged and wounded by the ignoble behavior of the Soviet cultural bureaucracy. We had the right and the duty to intervene.

APPENDIX I

A PROVOCATIVE SALLY OF INTERNATIONAL REACTION

(*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, October 25, 1958)

THE SWEDISH ACADEMY OF LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY has awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for 1958 to the decadent poet B. Pasternak for, as the decree puts it, "an important contribution both to modern lyricism, and to the great traditions of the Russian prose writers." This sensational decision which is penetrated with lies and hypocrisy has been received by the reactionary bourgeois press with a roar of enthusiasm. Furthermore, the press of the capitalist monopolies makes no attempt to hide the fact that this dirty trick on the part of the Swedish 'literary' conservatives arises from one thing—the publication in some capitalist countries of B. Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago*, since all his other works are practically unknown in the West. The presentation of the award for an artistically poverty-stricken and malicious work, which is full of hatred of socialism, is an inimical political act, directed against the Soviet Union. It was not the 'refined,' abstruse lyricism of Pasternak, nor the great traditions of Russian prose writers (which are deeply foreign to him), that inspired the perpetrators of this deed. The bourgeois 'experts' and 'connoisseurs' of literature have behaved in this instance as a tool for international reaction. Their decision is directed toward an intensification of the cold war against the Soviet Union, against the Soviet system, and against the idea of all-conquering socialism.

The hypocrisy of the very phrasing of the prize-giving is disclosed by the ballyhoo which B. Pasternak's novel, *Doctor Zhivago*, has raised in the West. In 1956 the editorial boards of Soviet

journals and publications turned down this novel as counter-revolutionary and slanderous. In spite of the serious critical comments, B. Pasternak considered it possible to pass the manuscript of *Doctor Zhivago* to bourgeois publishing houses.

The materials which we publish today (among them the letter to the *Novy Mir* editorial board, which was sent to B. Pasternak in September, 1956) will give the reader a clear impression both of the novel *Doctor Zhivago* and of the ideological and political standpoint of its author.

Folk legends bestow immortality on their heroes. But never, in any mythology whatsoever, has it been bestowed on traitors. There is no myth of the resurrection of Judas. But treachery is tenacious of life, it can also rise up again after death, particularly if it never wanted to die.

Boris Pasternak, author of the novel, *Doctor Zhivago*, buried his hero who was a renegade and a traitor, and who scorned the Russian people and its great October Revolution, achieved with the loss of its own blood. But Doctor Zhivago did not die—he didn't want to —before he had completed a whole chain of treacherous actions. During his lifetime he was afraid to go over to the side of the enemies of the Revolution which constantly attracted him, because he was afraid for his own skin. Although he died in the novel he has today begun a new life in the incorporeal cloud of a literary hero and has set off on a round-the-world journey to betray his homeland wherever possible. Now Doctor Zhivago is among his own people, and his creator, B. Pasternak, has received the "thirty pieces of silver," for which the Nobel Prize has been used.

Who helped this Judas who has risen again to become such a fashionable figure on the political arena of the West? How do our enemies rate Boris Pasternak, the author of the novel?

The story of the presentation of the Nobel Prize for 1958 to this writer is one of a carefully thought-out ideological diversion, to which the anti-Communist campaign recently developed by the most reactionary powers of the West has devoted a great deal of space.

In December of last year Albert Camus, the French writer and newly baked Nobel Prize laureate, attacked Soviet literature and the

principles of socialist realism, and of all the living writers of our country judged only B. Pasternak as worthy of the epithet "great." This eulogy became a commonplace in the Western press and got particularly strong after the novel, *Doctor Zhivago*, had been published in Italy, France, England, the United States and other countries.

Pasternak's book—the life story of a malicious philistine, an enemy of the Revolution—was received as a weapon for stirring up the cold war by the reactionary press. So it was that the French weekly *Art* wrote not without scornful condescension: "It was not so much the literary as the political significance of *Doctor Zhivago* which brought it into the foreground." "Pasternak became famous in the West even before people here became acquainted with his work," it was emphasized in *Figaro Littéraire*.

It must be admitted that at first, before they foresaw the part which *Doctor Zhivago* was to play in anti-Soviet propaganda, many Western critics expressed themselves quite openly on its modest artistic merits. This, for example, is what Gustav Gerling observed in the West German journal *Merkur*: the novel of Pasternak "cannot in any respect be considered as a fully successful work: it is peopled with figures whose psychology is weakly outlined, and is chaotic in construction." The Dutch bourgeois newspaper *Het Parool* saw in the novel "affectation, literary awkwardness, long drawn-out symbolism and an uneconomic use of characters." And the well-known French critic André Rousseau stated without beating about the bush: "It seems to me that Pasternak's realism is very close indeed to banality and even vulgar naturalism. However it may be, in this case we don't feel that overpowering force which great works normally exert on us. . . . I don't know whether this novel will arouse a great response on an international scale."

But soon the wind began to blow in quite another direction. This was as soon as the American press, and the weekly magazine *Nation* in particular, said that it was a "mistake" that Pasternak had not up to the present received the Nobel Prize, and it demanded in a categorical tone that "this mistake should be rectified when the laureates were next chosen." The pages of West European and American newspapers and journals began to fill with portraits of Pasternak, his conversations with bourgeois journalists, and ecstatic

articles in which were applauded his anti-social position, his refusal to accept the Soviet mode of life, and the anti-national spirit of his last book.

It was in fact the feeling of enmity toward the people found in Pasternak's novel, and the spirit of hatred toward and contempt for the simple man which penetrates his work from beginning to end, which gained the enraptured esteem of each and every enemy of socialism. Now, indeed, after the prize has been awarded, the Swedish newspaper *Aftonbladet*, in an article by K. Vennberg, frankly considers the role of Pasternak, the prose writer, as exaggerated, and admits that the award of the prize was dictated by political motives, thanks to which Zhivago-Pasternak "by-passed" the candidature of Mikhail Sholokhov.

In his novel Pasternak openly hates the Russian people. He says not one good word for our workers, peasants or the soldiers of the Red Army. *Doctor Zhivago* is a concentrated, condensed slander on Soviet partisans, on the Red Army, and on the great creation of the builders of a new life on Soviet land. It is understandable why they preferred an author who was a slanderer to one who dedicated his work to depicting figures who had emerged from the thick of the people.

It was really impossible for the bourgeois ideologists not to seize upon a work which the French critic Maurice Nadot, in a burst of ecstasy, characterized as a book, in which "the legality of Soviet power, the validity of what is called the building of socialism is disputed, and also the October Revolution and Marxism."

Both the novel and the personality of its author have become a golden vein for the reactionary press which has made up its mind to use this find to the end.

They have presented Pasternak to the Western reader as a sort of "great martyr" who did not wish, as was stated in the weekly magazine *Art*, to submit to "the decrees of the dictators of Soviet literature." But is it possible to label as a "decree," or "harsh dictatorship," the letter which the editorial board of *Novy Mir* addressed to Boris Pasternak in September, 1956, a letter which was written before the author of *Doctor Zhivago*, in silent rapture, began to receive, like something due, praises which had been hacked out for him in the West and spiced with anti-Soviet slander?

In the letter to Pasternak which we publish today there is both a detailed analysis of his book and a warning which should have given the author food for thought. It seemed that he was beginning to understand the arguments of Soviet writers who read his manuscript. But being endowed with the psychology of his own hero, the militant individualist Zhivago, he gave himself up to the flattering sirens of foreign propaganda. In order to pay heed to the voice of one's pen colleagues, one must regard them as friends and people of like mind. But Pasternak did not want to see in Soviet writers friends and people who shared his ideas. In the grip of megalomania, he didn't hesitate to shower dirt on Mayakovsky in his *Autobiography*, published at the same time as his novel in France; he did this although, as is well known, they were at one time on the best of terms. The very same hand wrote *Doctor Zhivago* and these blasphemous lines: "They started to spread Mayakovsky by force, like potatoes in the time of Catherine the Great." Is it surprising that the French journal *Art* used these words for the heading of one of its columns? "We are happy," wrote the editors in publishing this excerpt from *Autobiography*, "to present to the reader these unpublished pages." . . . How else can the "deep-felt" lines written by Pasternak on the death of Mayakovsky be considered, if not as the kiss of a Judas?

The "happiness" felt by the editors of *Art* was shared by all who lent their hand to another anti-Soviet action. . . . The critic of the American journal, *Time*, was attracted most of all by the novel's "anti-Marxist passages, which make you hold your breath." The English newspaper *The Times* praised Pasternak's position in its *Literary Supplement*, since he had opposed himself to all Soviet literature and the aesthetics of the Communist Party. It was on this account, the London ill-wishers continued, "that he achieved a significance which by far surpassed the value of his works."

However much the reactionary press tries to 'raise' and artificially increase Pasternak's importance it cannot conceal the fact that *Doctor Zhivago* is a petty, useless and rather mean, little bit of 'fancy work.' Western propaganda today is in a poor state if it seizes upon this badly smelling pasquinade as a godsend.

Full well understanding the real artistic 'significance' of Pasternak's novel, the bourgeois press, long before the prize was awarded,

as though it anticipated the motives for the decision of the jury in Stockholm, began to impose upon its readers the idea that *Doctor Zhivago* was a work which carried on the classical traditions of nineteenth-century Russian literature. It was obvious that, by its very inspiration and content, Pasternak's novel was a foreign body in Soviet literature. So the attempts of our enemies to link it in some way or another with the national tradition are quite understandable. But what can you find in common between the great humanism and democratism of the classical Russian writers and *Doctor Zhivago*, a novel completely filled with contempt and hatred for the people and its affairs? What can you find in common between the lofty and bright ideals of the Russian classics, their great and real love for the ordinary man, and the petty self-centered egocentric morals of Pasternak's novel?

This year's pitiful and comical attempts to 'exalt' the Nobel laureate are in direct contrast with the indifference which the jury for awarding Nobel Literary Prizes showed, and is still showing, toward the genuinely outstanding names of our national literature. It is worth remembering that in the past neither Leo Tolstoy, Anton Chekhov, nor Maxim Gorky—these giants of world literature —were considered 'worthy' of this award. Many Russian writers have made inestimable contributions to the treasure house of world literature, but only I. Bunin received the prize in 1933, Bunin the white emigrant, who by that time had finally lost all links with the Russian people. And now they are crowning Pasternak with this prize, and struggling to conceal behind the words used by the jury the essentially political, anti-Soviet essence of a campaign, which is the form which the award of the Nobel Literary Prize has taken this year.

If the Swedish '*littérateurs*' and their inspirers from across the Atlantic were really moved by the urge to pay respect to the services of a genuinely popular writer who was a worthy successor to the great traditions of Russian literature, they could have found in our country artists of the word who were accepted and loved by millions of readers.

We cannot be indifferent to what is happening around B. Pasternak's novel in the West. We cannot be indifferent to a work which slanders what is dearest to the heart of every Soviet

man and woman—our Revolution, which cost the blood of the best sons and daughters of the people. The internal emigrant Zhivago, faint-hearted and base in his small-mindedness, is alien to Soviet people, as is the malicious literary snob Pasternak—he is their opponent, he is the ally of those who hate our country and our system. And the 'ovation' which has been prepared for him in the West is clear confirmation of this. "The Nobel Prize against Communism"—proclaim the thick letters under the portrait of Pasternak in the Vienna newspaper *Neue Kurier*. You can't say it plainer than that.

The provocation and fuss connected with Pasternak's novel, which is aimed at discrediting the achievements of the October Socialist Revolution, will arouse the angry resentment of every Soviet man and woman. Our people are accustomed to respect the high calling of the Soviet writer, and to see in him a fighter for the foremost ideals of the epoch and the interests of the people, to look upon him as a participant in the fiercest ideological skirmishes of our time on the side of the forces of peace and socialism.

But Pasternak? He has put a weapon in the hands of the enemy, by giving the bourgeois publishing houses his book which was saturated with an anti-Soviet spirit. He was silent when people who made hatred of socialism their profession, such as the French obscurantist, Maurice Nadot, or the arch-intriguer of an American journal, Sulzberger, extolled his novel for its "Smerdyakov" spitting on the Russian people and its great Revolution. He is silent even now when his novel is placed, in the words of the *Ceylon Daily News*, "by certain circles who are interested in the cold war," side by side with such poisonous weapons of anti-Communism as the books of Djilas and Imre Nagy. He remains silent even when the hubbub of propaganda in the West boldly identifies the author with his hero—Doctor Zhivago—indeed he is, as the agency France Presse remarks, "intellectually, morally and even physically like Pasternak, like his own brother."

This "master of the written word," who has slandered our Motherland in so many foreign tongues, forgot how to speak the truth a long time ago. He has lived in our country like the correspondents of those reactionary foreign newspapers who are lauding him to the skies today. He closed his eyes to the great changes which

have taken place and are taking place in our country in full view of the whole world, those great achievements which were seen and highly praised by such sober foreign observers as Eleanor Roosevelt, Cyrus Eaton, Rockwell Kent and many, many others.

Today our enemies praise him for his silence which conceals the spite of a rabid individualist. "The object of the transformation and collectivization, and the aims of society," writes the French newspaper *Témoignage Chrétien*, "are of no importance whatsoever to him. . . ."

B. Pasternak has achieved at the present time "world fame" among those who use every opportunity to denigrate the Soviet Union and its social and state structure. But there are only two sides, those who are building Communism, and those who are trying to arrest its advance. Pasternak has made his choice. He has chosen the path of shame and dishonor.

The path of shame . . . On the eve of the presentation of the Nobel Prize the French newspaper *Figaro Littéraire*, foreseeing the decision of the jury, described with unconcealed triumph how beautifully the "trap set for Moscow" had worked. The honor conferred on Pasternak was not great. He was rewarded because he voluntarily agreed to play the part of a bait on the rusty hook of anti-Soviet propaganda. But it is difficult to hold this 'position' for long. A piece of bait is changed as soon as it goes rotten. History shows that such changes take place very quickly. An ignominious end waits for this Judas who has risen again, for Doctor Zhivago, and for his creator, who is destined to be scorned by the people.

APPENDIX II

PUBLICATION OF *Novy Mir's* 1956 LETTER TO PASTERNAK

(*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, October 25, 1958)

A. Covering Letter to *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. From the Editorial Board of *Novy Mir* (October 24, 1958; signed by the 1958 editorial board of *Novy Mir*, A. T. Tvardovsky, editor-in-chief, and Y. N. Gerasimov, S. N. Golubov, A. G. Dementyev, deputy editor-in-chief, B. G. Zaks, B. A. Lavrenyov, V. V. Ovechkin and K. A. Fedin):

The editors of the magazine *Novy Mir* ask you to publish in your paper the letter which the members of the then editorial board of *Novy Mir* sent in September, 1956, to Boris Pasternak about the manuscript of his novel *Doctor Zhivago*.

This letter, rejecting the manuscript, was naturally not intended for publication. It was addressed to the author of the novel when there was still hope that he would draw the appropriate conclusions from the criticism contained in the letter and it was not thought that Pasternak would take a path bringing discredit on the honorable calling of the Soviet writer.

However, circumstances have decidedly changed. Far from heeding the criticisms of his novel, Pasternak, on the contrary, even considered it possible to hand over his manuscript to foreign publishers. In so doing, Pasternak flouted elementary conceptions of the honor and conscience of a Soviet writer.

Published abroad, this book of Pasternak's, which is a libel on the October Revolution, the people who made the Revolution and the building of socialism in the Soviet Union, has been taken up by the bourgeois press and accepted by international reaction as a weapon in their arsenal.

Now, as we have learned, Pasternak has been awarded a Nobel Prize. It is quite obvious that this award has nothing at all in

common with an impartial assessment of the literary merits of Pasternak's work itself, but is connected with the anti-Soviet clamor which has been raised around *Doctor Zhivago*, and is purely a political act hostile to our country and aimed at intensifying the cold war.

These are the reasons why we now believe it to be necessary to make public this letter to Boris Pasternak from the former editorial board of *Novy Mir*. It explains convincingly enough why Pasternak's novel could have no place in a Soviet magazine, although naturally it does not express to the full the disgust and contempt which we, like all Soviet writers, feel over Pasternak's present shameful and unpatriotic attitude.

The letter is being published at the same time in issue No. 11 of *Novy Mir*.

B. Letter to Boris Pasternak from the Editorial Board of *Novy Mir* in September, 1956:

Boris Leonidovich,

We have read the manuscript of your novel *Doctor Zhivago*, which you submitted to our magazine, and we would like to tell you, in all frankness, what we thought after reading it. We were both alarmed and distressed.

We realize, of course, that if it were merely a question of likes and dislikes, a question of personal tastes or of sharp, perhaps, but purely literary differences, an aesthetic argument might very well be of little interest to you. You might agree, or you might disagree and say: "The magazine is rejecting the manuscript—so much the worse for the magazine; the artist keeps his own private opinion about its aesthetic merits."

In this case, however, the situation is much more complicated than that. The thing that has disturbed us about your novel is something that neither the editors nor the author can change by cuts or alterations. We are referring to the spirit of the novel, its general tenor, the author's view on life, the real view or, at any rate, the one formed by the reader. This is what we consider it our duty to discuss with you as men whom you may or may not listen to, but whose collective opinion you have no reason to regard as biased, so that it would be reasonable, at least, to hear it out.

The spirit of your novel is that of nonacceptance of the socialist revolution. The general tenor of your novel is that the October Revolution, the civil war and the social transformations involved

did not give the people anything but suffering, and destroyed the Russian intelligentsia, either physically or morally. The burden of the author's views on our country's past and, above all, the first ten years after the October Revolution (for it is with the end of that decade—barring the Epilogue—that the novel concludes) is that the October Revolution was a mistake, that the participation in it of sympathizers from among the intelligentsia was an irreparable disaster, and that everything which happened afterwards was evil.

To those who had earlier read your poems *1905*, *Lieutenant Schmidt*, *Second Birth*, *Waves* and *Early Trains*—poetry which we, at any rate, thought was imbued with a different spirit, a different tenor—your novel has been a distressing experience.

It would be no mistake, we think, to say that you regard the story of Zhivago's life and death as a story of the life and death of the Russian intelligentsia, a story of its road to the revolution and through the revolution, and of its death as a result of the revolution.

There is in the novel an easily discernible watershed which, overriding your own arbitrary division of the work into two parts, lies somewhere between the first third of the novel and the rest. This watershed—the year 1917—is a dividing line between the awaited and the accomplished. Before it, your heroes were waiting for something different from what actually occurred, and beyond it came what they had not expected and did not want and what, as you depict it, led them to physical or moral death.

The first third of your novel, covering the period of the twenty years before the revolution, does not yet contain a clearly expressed nonacceptance of the coming revolution but, to our mind, the roots of this nonacceptance are already there. Later, when you begin to describe the accomplished revolution, your views develop into a system that is more orderly, more forthright in its nonacceptance of the revolution. In the first third of the novel they are as yet contradictory. On the one hand, you admit—in an abstract, declamatory way—that the world of bourgeois property and bourgeois inequality is unjust, and you not only reject it as an ideal, but actually regard it as unacceptable to the mankind of the future. But once you turn from abstract declarations to a description of life, to actual people, these people—both the masters of unjust, bourgeois

life and their intellectual servitors, who are helping to preserve the iniquity you admit in general—turn out to be, with extremely rare exceptions (such as the blackguard Komarovsky, for instance), the nicest, kindest and subtlest of spirits, who do good, who seek, who suffer, and who are really incapable of harming a fly.

This whole world of pre-revolutionary, bourgeois Russia, which you disown in general, turns out to be quite acceptable to you when you get down to a specific description of it. Moreover, it turns out to be poignantly dear to your author's heart. The only unacceptable thing about it is some general iniquity of exploitation and inequality which, however, remains behind the scenes, while everything that actually happens in your novel turns out, in the last analysis, to be most idyllic; capitalists make donations to the revolution and live honestly; intellectuals enjoy complete freedom of thought and are intellectually independent of the bureaucratic machine of the Czarist regime; poor girls find rich and disinterested protectors, while sons of workmen and caretakers find no difficulty in getting an education.

On balance, the characters in your novel live well and justly. Some of them want to live better and more justly—this, indeed, is as much as your main heroes have to do with the expectation of the revolution. The novel gives no real picture of the country or the people. Nor, consequently, does it explain why revolution became inevitable in Russia, or reveal a measure of the intolerable suffering and social injustice that led the people to it.

Most of the characters whom the author has lovingly invested with a part of his own spirit are persons who have grown accustomed to living in an atmosphere of talk about the revolution, but that revolution has not become a necessity for a single one of them. They like to talk about it in one way or another, but they can also do very well without it; nor was there anything in their existence before the revolution that was intolerable or that simply poisoned their lives, even if no more than spiritually. And there are no other persons in the novel (if we are to confine ourselves to characters who enjoy the author's sympathy and who are drawn with anything like a similar measure of penetration and detail).

As for the people suffering in a declamatory way behind the scenes, they appear in the first third of the novel as something of

an unknown quantity, something that is supposed to exist, and the author's real attitude to this unknown quantity becomes clear only after the revolution is accomplished and the people begin to act.

The first third of the novel is, primarily, a chronicle of several gifted individuals, living a many-sided intellectual life and concentrating on the problem of their own spiritual lives. One of these gifted individuals, Nikolai Nikolaievich, says at the very beginning of the novel that "the herd instinct is the refuge of mediocre people, whether it is loyalty to Solovyev, or Kant, or Marx. Truth is sought after only by isolated individuals, and they break with all who do not love it enough. Is there anything on earth that deserves loyalty? Such things are very few."

This idea is presented in the novel within the context of Nikolai Nikolaievich's God-seeking. But beginning with the second third of the novel it gradually becomes a condensed expression of the author's attitude to the people and to the revolutionary movement.

And then comes, or rather explodes, the revolution. It explodes in the faces of your heroes unexpectedly, because—for all their talk—they did not expect it, and when it comes, the revolution and the way it works out in practice plunge them into a state of amazement. In speaking about how the revolution comes into your novel, it is even hard to distinguish between the February and the October revolutions. In your novel it all comes to much the same thing, to 1917 in general, when, at first, the changes were not too sharp and did not disrupt the lives of your "truth-seeking individuals"—your heroes—in too noticeable a way; and then, later, the changes went further and cut deeper, more painfully. Their lives became increasingly dependent on the tremendous, unprecedented things which were happening in the country, and this dependence, as it grew, infuriated them and made them regret what had happened.

Theoretically speaking, it would be hard to imagine a novel in which the scene was set to a large extent in 1917 that would not, in one way or another, give a definite appraisal of the social difference between the February and the October revolutions. Yet that is precisely the case in your novel! It is hard to imagine that first the February Revolution, and then the October Revolution, which divided so many people into different camps, would not define the attitudes of the heroes of a novel about that period. It is hard to

imagine that people leading an intellectual life and occupying a certain position in society would not define, in one way or another, their attitude at that time to such events as the overthrow of autocracy, the coming to power of Kerensky, the July events, Kornilov's revolt, the October uprising, the seizure of power by the Soviets and the disbanding of the Constituent Assembly.

Yet the characters in your novel do not openly state their views on any of these events; they do not give any straightforward assessment of the events through which the country lived in that period. One might, of course, say that the author simply did not care to call things by their proper names, that he did not care to give a straightforward estimation of the events, either himself or through his characters, and there may be some truth in that explanation. But we think that the whole truth lies much deeper than this partial explanation.

The truth, to our mind, is that your "truth-seeking individuals" become increasingly furious with the mounting revolution, not because they do not accept some of its specific forms such as the October uprising or the disbanding of the Constituent Assembly, but because of the various individual discomforts to which it condemns them personally.

Faced with an actual revolution, which took the place of their talk about revolution and in which they were mere bystanders, these "truth-seeking individuals," whom the author has originally presented as men of ideas, or, rather, as people living in a world of ideas, turn out to be, almost to a man, people who are far from having any desire to uphold any ideas, whether revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, let alone to sacrifice their lives for them.

They continue, to all appearances, to lead spiritual lives, but their attitude to the revolution, and their actions, above all, become increasingly dependent on the measure of personal discomforts brought about by the revolution, such as hunger, cold, overcrowded living conditions, and the disruption of the cosy, well-fed pre-war existence to which they had become accustomed. It is hard to name another work in which heroes with pretensions to higher spiritual values, living in years in which very great events are taking place, show so much anxiety about food, potatoes, firewood and the other comforts and discomforts of life as they do in your novel.

Your heroes, and, in the first place, Doctor Zhivago himself, have spent the years of revolution and civil war in search of comparative well-being and tranquillity, and they do this amid the vicissitudes of the struggle, in the middle of the general devastation and ruin. They are not physical cowards. You go out of your way, as an author, to stress this. Yet at the same time, their only purpose is to preserve their own lives, and it is by this that they are guided in all their main actions. It is the knowledge that their lives are not secure in the conditions of revolution and civil war that leads them to growing resentment against everything that happens. They are not property-grabbers, gourmets or sybarites. They need all this, not for its own sake, but merely as a means of continuing, in safety, to lead their spiritual lives.

What lives? Why, the lives which they led in the past, for nothing new enters into their spiritual life and nothing changes it. They regard the possibility of continuing to lead it, without outside interference, as the greatest blessing, not only for themselves, but for all mankind, and since the revolution stubbornly requires them to act, to say 'for' or 'against,' they turn, in self-defense, from a feeling of being alienated from the revolution to a feeling of active hostility toward it.

In those grim years, which called for various sacrifices not only by those who had accomplished the revolution but also by its enemies, by those who had fought it, arms in hand—in those years the "truth-seeking individuals" turned out to be merely "highly gifted" philistines and, indeed, it is difficult to imagine how, say, the Zhivago family would subsequently have looked upon the revolution had they not in the winter of 1918 found themselves for various reasons in a Moscow flat, as crowded and as hungry as the novel presents it. However, life in Moscow turned out to be cold, hungry and difficult, and the "truth-seeking individual" became a food-grabbing intellectual, who so much wanted to continue his own existence that he forgot he was a doctor and concealed this fact during the years of nation-wide suffering, privations and epidemics.

"There are no peoples, only individuals in that new mode of existence and that new form of communion conceived by the heart and known as the Kingdom of God," remarks Doctor Zhivago on one of the pages of the novel, as yet without reference to his future

existence during the civil war. Subsequently, however, it turns out that the remark had a deep significance with reference to himself. It becomes clear in those hard years of civil war that he does not admit that such a thing as a people exists. He recognizes only himself as an individual whose interests and suffering he rates higher than anything else, as an individual who in no way feels himself a part of a people, who feels no responsibility toward the people.

When he finds himself in the middle of terrible nation-wide suffering, Doctor Zhivago forgets everything but his own ego and, as an appendix to it, people related to that ego, either directly or indirectly. That ego, as embodied in himself and those dear to him, is not merely the only thing worth bothering about, but is, indeed, the only thing of value in the whole universe. It embraces all the past and all the future, and if it were to die, everything would die with it.

It is no accident that Larisa Feodorovna, in complete harmony with Zhivago's thoughts, tells him at the height of the civil war:

"You and I are like the first people, Adam and Eve, who had nothing to cover themselves with at the beginning of the world. We are just as naked and homeless at its end. You and I are the last memory of all that the immeasurably great achieved in the world in the many thousands of years lying between them and us, and in memory of those vanished miracles we breathe and love, and weep, and hold on to each other, and cling to each other."

A new page opens in the history of mankind—the October Revolution stirs hundreds of millions of people throughout the world into motion for decades to come, but, it seems, the only thing of value left, the only memory of the "immeasurably great" past of mankind is Doctor Zhivago and the woman who is sharing his life! Doesn't it seem to you that in this almost pathological individual there is a naïve grandiloquence of people who cannot and do not want to see anything around them and who therefore attach a ludicrously exaggerated importance to their own persons?

You say in your novel, through Doctor Zhivago, that "it is the end of man, his condemnation, to conform to type." This is the reverse side of your pretense as an author that your "truth-seeking individuals" are superior people who cannot be fitted into the definition of a type—people who are above this.

It is difficult to agree with that, however. We would not want to waive the right to identify both Doctor Zhivago and other characters akin to him in spirit as a phenomenon that is typical enough in a time of revolution and civil war, and in subsequent periods as well. Least of all do we want to say that such people did not exist and that the story of Doctor Zhivago is far from being typical.

As we see it, Doctor Zhivago accurately personifies a certain type of Russian intellectual of that period—a man who loved to talk, and knew how to talk, about the sufferings of the people, but who could not cure those sufferings either in the literal or figurative meaning of the word. He is the type of man bloated with a sense of his own self-importance, of his own self-value, a man far removed from the people and ready to betray them in time of difficulty, to cut himself off both from their sufferings and their cause. He is the type of 'highly intellectual' philistine—tame when left alone, quick to bristle up when touched, and ever ready, in thought and deed, to do anything unfair to the people upon what he takes to be the slightest unfairness, real or imaginary, toward his own person.

There have been such people, quite a few of them, and the point of our dispute with you is not whether they have existed or not, but whether they deserve the unqualified apologia which your novel is, whether they are the cream of the Russian intelligentsia, as you seek to prove by every artifice of your talent, or whether they are its disease. The appearance of this disease in the period of confusion and reaction between the first and second Russian revolutions is easily explained, but is there any point in presenting these people, with their philistine inaction in the hour of crisis, with their cowardice in social life, and their constant evasion of a definite answer to the question "Whose side are you on?" as superior beings who allegedly have the right to pass an objective judgment on the surrounding world, and in the first place on the revolution and the people?

It is through these people, and above all Doctor Zhivago, that you seek to pass judgment on all that has happened in our country beginning with the October Revolution, and it can be said without exaggeration that no character has as much of the author's sympathy as Doctor Zhivago and persons who share his views to such an extent that their dialogues, in most cases, read like monologues.

It may be added that nothing in the novel has as much talent and care lavished on it as your description of the thoughts and moods of these people, and that characters holding different views exist in the novel only quantitatively, as a "herd," to quote your expression. They are voiceless and have no ability either to reason or to refute anything at the trial of the revolution conducted in your novel, where both the judge and the prosecutor are, in effect, united in a single person—Doctor Zhivago. The author has provided him with several assistants who echo his diatribes with subtle variations, but there is no one at the trial to defend what Zhivago condemns.

Meanwhile, as his personal discomforts and privations brought about by the revolution increase, Doctor Zhivago becomes increasingly virulent and intransigent in his condemnation. It would not be out of place, we think, to trace this lopsided process—not for the sake of having a profusion of quotations, but so as to enable you to see all this together, at one glance. It may be that you yourself did not realize what you had written, lost as it was among the vicissitudes of a large novel. We would like to believe that.

At one point in the story, Doctor Zhivago goes to Yuriatin and has an argument with Kostoiedov, who says that he doesn't know anything and doesn't want to know anything. "So I don't," Kostoiedov says. "What of it? For God's sake, why should I know everything and stand up for everything? History doesn't care about me, and forces on me everything it wants; let me, too, ignore the facts. You say: 'Words are inconsistent with reality.' But is there any reality in Russia today? I think it's been bullied so much that it has gone into hiding."

There is another piece of reasoning dating back to the same period (1917 or 1918—it is hard to tell from the novel), to the same trip to Yuriatin. This time the speaker is not Yurii Andreievich himself, but his father-in-law, Alexander Alexandrovich, with whom he has lived in complete agreement throughout the civil war and whose utterances are so similar that punctuation alone makes it possible to determine what is being said by Zhivago and what is being said by Alexander Alexandrovich.

"Enough, I understand what you mean. I like the way you put the question. You have found exactly the right words. Now, here is what I'll tell you. Remember the night you brought a handbill

with the first decrees, in winter, in a blizzard. Remember their utter finality. Directness like that was overpowering. But such things live in their original purity only in the minds of their creators, and then only on the day they are proclaimed. The very next day they are turned upside down and inside out by the jesuitry of politics. What can I say to you? This philosophy is alien to me. This power is against us. I wasn't asked for my consent to this breaking up. But I was trusted, and my actions, even if they were carried out under duress, are binding on me."

Thus spoke Alexander Alexandrovich when Zhivago asked him how they could work out the most becoming forms of mimicry, such that they need not blush for one another. The closing words about actions under duress were spoken at random, to no purpose, for neither Zhivago nor Alexander Alexandrovich had done anything in particular for the revolution. It merely happened that they had found themselves in Moscow under the Bolsheviks, had served and had received a ration for it, and when the ration proved insufficient, they had left in search of a better place. Equally pointless are the words about duty, for the rest of the novel shows that neither Alexander Alexandrovich nor Zhivago has the slightest trace of a sense of duty to the revolution or to the people. What is left? An assertion that they had been deceived, that they had, one night, liked the directness of the first Soviet decrees and that later, when that directness was translated into action and affected their existence, they felt that power to be against them. The line of reasoning can be explained. What cannot be explained is why the plaintiff should be passed off as the judge.

But there is a definite philosophy behind the revolution which brought Doctor Zhivago discomforts and privations. The revolution wrongs Doctor Zhivago. Therefore, he argues, the philosophy behind it is also wrong, and it should be declared bankrupt.

"Marxism and science?" Doctor Zhivago asks at the beginning of Part Two of the book. "It is imprudent, to say the least, to discuss that with a stranger. And come what may, Marxism is too poor a master of itself to be a science. A science is balanced. Marxism and objectivity? I know of no teaching that is more isolated in itself and more divorced from reality than Marxism."

Already this bitter invective against Marxism has more than a touch of irritation, which makes itself fully felt later, when

Zhivago meets Larisa Feodorovna in Yuriatin (in 1919, to judge by certain hints).

"You have changed," she said. "Previously you judged the revolution less harshly and without irritation."

"The point is, Larisa Feodorovna, that there's a limit to everything, and something ought to have been achieved during this time. It turns out, however, that the turmoil of changes and shifts is the only native element of the guiding spirits of the revolution and they'd give anything to tackle something on a world scale. For them this building of new worlds, and these transition periods are an end in themselves. That is all they know and all they can do. And do you know where all the whirl of those eternal preparations comes from? From a lack of real abilities, from an absence of talent. A man is born to live, not to prepare to live, and life as such, the phenomenon of life, the gift of life are so thrilling and serious! Why then substitute for this a puerile farce of adolescent contrivances, these Chekhovian children's flights to America?"

Thus, as early as 1919, Zhivago considered that the revolution ought to have achieved something, and hadn't. What it ought to have done, we don't know. Judging by his egocentric views on what is good and what is bad, it ought to have enabled him at least to return to the normal, comfortable life he had led before the revolution. The revolution, however, had not yet done this for him and he was angry with it and passed judgment on it and its leaders: they are not gifted, and they have learned nothing and are capable of nothing.

As for the civil war, he regards it as an adolescent contrivance, as something on a par with the flight of children to America in a Chekhov story. The humor is rather cheap, but the malice, to do him justice, is not trifling.

Zhivago sees the old life broken up and transformed around him in a brutal, bloody and difficult process, the rightness of which can only be gauged from the standpoint of the interests of the people as a whole, from the standpoint of someone who puts the people above everything else. And that is precisely what Zhivago lacks. His attitude is the diametrical opposite of this. He judges the people and their work by the yardstick of his own physical and spiritual well-being, and it is only natural, in conditions of civil war, that he should return more and more frequently to the idea that what he has left behind was better than the world he now has to live in.

Since personal well-being is the principal criterion of all there is in this world, he has no need for the transformation of life that has been undertaken, and he would rather return to the past than see the transformation go on.

Talking to Liberius Averkievich, the commander of a guerrilla detachment, Zhivago says:

"To begin with, the ideas of general self-perfection, as they have come to be understood since October, don't fill me with enthusiasm. Secondly, all this is still far from being accomplished, and the mere talk about it has had to be paid for with such a sea of blood that the end, perhaps, doesn't justify the means. Thirdly, and this is the main thing, when I hear about a transformation of life, I lose all self-control, I am driven to despair."

Having said this, Zhivago reverts to the theme on a later occasion:

"Transformation of life! That can only be talked of by people who don't know life, even if they have seen a lot of it—by people who haven't felt its spirit, its soul. To them, existence is a lump of coarse material which has not been ennobled by their touch and which requires fashioning. But life has never been a material, a substance. If you want to know, life itself is a constantly self-renewing, self-transforming category. It is constantly refashioning and realizing itself and it is far above our boneheaded theories."

Thus, there is no need to transform life, and the theories which inspire this transformation are boneheaded!

Behind the fine words about the self-renewing and self-transforming substance of life is the brute cry: Don't touch me! Give me back what I had, for it is everything to me, and I couldn't care less about the rest. Over the page Zhivago states this with complete frankness:

"I admit that you are the shining lights and liberators of Russia, that she would have perished without you, swamped by abject poverty and ignorance. None the less, I have no use for you and I don't care if you die. I don't like you, and you can all go to hell."

It is hard to imagine a more zoological apostasy than this: it may be that what you are doing for Russia is good and useful, but I couldn't care less!

Later, on leaving the partisan detachment in which he has been compelled to serve, because there was no one there to look after the wounded, and in which he has shot at the Whites he sympathized with and tended wounded Reds whom he loathed, Doctor Zhivago

returns to Yuriatin and sees new decrees posted up in the town occupied by the Reds. And he recalls what his father-in-law had said about the first decrees of the revolution when they were traveling from Moscow.

"What are these inscriptions?" he wonders, looking at the decrees. "Do they date back to last year, or the year before?" Once in his life he had expressed admiration for the bluntness of their language and the forthrightness of their thought. Must he now pay for that rash admiration by never again seeing anything in his life but these crazy outcries and demands that have not changed for years, and have become increasingly lifeless, difficult to understand and impracticable? Can it be that he had enslaved himself forever by a moment of too ready response?

Zhivago is so depressed by the realization that the revolution is winning that he is ready to curse himself—no, not for actions for the sake of the revolution, for he has no such actions to his credit, but merely for his momentary admiration for the first decrees of Soviet power.

Such is the philosophy of the hero of your novel—a character who can no more be removed from it than the soul can be removed from the body. Such are his thoughts about the revolution. Such is the tone of a prosecutor which he adopts. Such is the measure of his hatred of the revolution.

One could quote other places in the novel repeating the same idea in different ways at different periods, but it would really be superfluous—the general trend of the trial of the revolution conducted by Doctor Zhivago is clear as it is.

This trial can safely be called iniquitous, and the viciousness of Zhivago's conclusions about the revolution is intensified by his feeling that he is powerless to oppose it.

Psychologically speaking, Doctor Zhivago is a split personality. His hatred of the revolution is enough for two Denikins, but, since he regards his 'ego as the most valuable thing in the world, he does not want to jeopardize its security by indulging in any openly counter-revolutionary actions, so he remains physically between the two camps, although ideologically he has long since aligned himself with the other side. Section 4 of chapter 11 of the second part of your novel is especially significant in this connection.

We have already mentioned this in passing, but we now con-

sider it necessary to examine it in detail in order to show the gulf between our attitude to Doctor Zhivago as you present him in your novel, and your own attitude to him. It is not a long section, so let us read it together in full:

The International Red Cross Convention lays it down that army doctors and medical orderlies have no right to take part in military operations with arms in their hands. But it happened once that the Doctor—against his will—had to break this rule. The engagement started while he was with the troops and he had to take part in it and shoot back.

When the firing began, the Doctor dropped to the ground alongside the signaler. The guerrillas lay in a line, with their backs to the taiga and facing a glade, an open clearing with no defense, across which the Whites were advancing.

They were already near. The Doctor saw them clearly, even their faces. Among them were boys and youths from nonmilitary sections of the capital's population, and older men called up from the reserve. But the tone was set by the former, by the youth, freshmen and lads from the 8th Forms of the gymnasiums, who had only recently volunteered.

The Doctor did not recognize anyone, but the faces of half of them seemed to him ordinary and familiar—faces he had seen on some previous occasion. They reminded him of his old schoolfellows. These were probably their younger brothers. He seemed to have met others in the theaters or in crowds in the street in days gone by, and their intelligent and attractive faces seemed somehow near and dear to him.

Doing their duty, as they understood it, inspired them with an impassioned foolhardiness—unnecessary and challenging. They came on in scattered formation, with their shoulders thrown back, matching the pick of the Guards in their bearing, flaunting danger without even running or getting down, though there were hillocks and hummocks and all kinds of unevenness in the ground which provided good cover. The partisans' bullets were mowing them down almost wholesale.

A withered, charred tree stood in the middle of the wide, bare clearing across which the Whites were moving rapidly. The tree had perhaps been struck by lightning or burned by a fire, or perhaps it had been cleft and singed in the earlier fighting. Every man of the Volunteer Corps, as he advanced, cast a glance at it, eager to hide behind the trunk in order to take more reliable aim in greater safety, but overcame the temptation and came straight on.

The partisans had a limited supply of cartridges. They had to be used sparingly. There was an order, supported by general consent,

that firing should be opened only at short range—one rifle for one visible target.

The Doctor was lying on the grass, unarmed, watching the fighting. All his sympathies were with these children who were meeting death so heroically. He wished them success with all his heart. They sprang from families who were probably akin to him through the same upbringing, the same moral outlook and mentality.

At the back of his mind he thought of running out into the clearing and surrendering—and so gaining deliverance, but this would have been a risky step, there was really no chance at all.

Before he could reach the middle of the clearing and raise his hands he would be picked off from both sides—a bullet in the chest and one in the back, from his own side as a punishment for treason, and from the other because they would not understand his intentions. More than once he had been in a similar situation; he had thought out all the possibilities and had long ago rejected such plans for saving himself. And so, resigning himself to his divided emotions, the Doctor remained lying in the grass, with his face toward the clearing, watching unarmed the course of the battle.

Yet to look on passively in the midst of a fight to the bitter end was unthinkable and beyond human endurance. It was not a matter of lovalty to the side to which he was fettered against his will, nor of self-preservation, but merely a matter of following the course of events, of submitting to the laws governing what was going on before him and around him. It was against the rules to remain passive. One had to do what the others did. It was a battle. He and his comrades were being shot at. He had to shoot back.

When the signaler at his side went into convulsions, stretched himself out, and then lay still, Yurii Andreievich dragged himself over to him, took off his cartridge bag and rifle and, returning to his previous position, began to fire the rifle, shot after shot.

Pity prevented him from aiming at the young people whom he admired and with whom he sympathized. Firing foolishly into the air was somehow too silly and idle, and was contrary to his intentions. And so seizing upon those moments where there was no one between him and his target, he began shooting at the charred tree. He even had a technique of his own.

Taking aim more and more accurately, and imperceptibly increasing the pressure on the trigger, yet without pulling it fully home, as if he were not going to fire at all, until the final pull, and the shot followed of its own accord, unexpectedly, as it were, the Doctor began, with the accuracy that came from long habit, to shoot off the dry lower branches of the dead tree.

Alas! No matter how careful he was not to hit anyone, an attacker would move between the tree and himself at a crucial moment, crossing the line of fire at the instant of the discharge. His bullets

grazed and wounded two of them, and it cost a third poor devil his life, and down he slumped next to the tree.

At last, convinced of the futility of the attack, the White command ordered a retreat.

The partisans were few in number. A part of their main forces was still on the march and another part had moved off to one side in an engagement with larger enemy forces. The detachment did not pursue the retreating enemy for fear he would see that they were outnumbered.

Medical assistant Angelar brought two ambulance men with stretchers to the clearing. The Doctor told them to attend to the wounded men, while he himself went over to the prostrate telephonist. He had a vague hope that the man might still be breathing and might come to. But the telephonist was dead. To make sure, Yurii Andreievich unbuttoned the man's shirt and listened for his heartbeat. His heart had stopped beating.

An amulet dangled from a silk cord around the man's neck. Yurii Andreievich took it off and found a piece of paper, frail and worn at the folds, sewn into the cloth. As the Doctor unfolded it the paper nearly fell to pieces in his hand.

Written on the paper were extracts from the 90th Psalm with changes and deviations such as the common people introduce into prayers, departing increasingly from the original with every repetition. Passages of the text in Church Slavonic had been rewritten in ordinary Russian letters.

The psalm says: "The quick in the help of the Almighty." Instead, the paper had the title: "The Quick Help." The line of the Psalm: "Unafraid . . . of the arrow that flieth by day" had turned into the words of encouragement: "Fear not the arrow that flieth in war." "As you know my name," says the psalm, whereas the paper said: "Has not known my name." Instead of "I endure with him in sorrow and bring him," the paper read: "I will help thee in sorrow and save him."

The text of the psalm was reputed to be miraculous, giving protection against bullets. Soldiers wore it as a talisman even in the First World War. Decades passed, and much later prisoners sewed it into their clothes and they repeated its words over and over again when summoned to the investigators in the night for interrogation.

Leaving the telephonist, Yurii Andreievich went over to the young White Guard he had killed. Innocence and forgiveness for all were written on the handsome face of the youth. "Why did I kill him?" the Doctor wondered.

He unbuttoned the dead man's uniform and opened it out. Seriozha Rantsevich, the man's name, was written on the lining in neat precise letters by a loving and careful hand, probably his mother's.

From a rent in Seriozha's shirt dropped a little cross, a medallion and a small flat case of gold, with the cover dented as if by a nail, hanging on a chain. The little case was half opened and a folded sheet of paper fluttered out of it. The Doctor unfolded it and could hardly believe his eyes. It was the same 90th Psalm, but printed and strictly in accordance with the Slavonic text.

At the moment Seriozha groaned and stirred. He was alive and, as it turned out, he was merely suffering from shock resulting from a slight internal injury. The spent bullet had struck his mother's amulet, and this had saved him. But what was to be done with the unconscious man?

The brutality of both sides had reached a climax by this time. Prisoners were not taken to their destination alive and the wounded were finished off with bayonets in the field.

Since the composition of the forest army was always in a state of flux, with new volunteers coming and old-timers leaving or deserting to the enemy, Rantsevich could be passed off for a newcomer, provided strict secrecy was preserved.

Yurii Andreievich took off the dead telephonist's clothes, and with the help of Angelar, whom he took into his confidence, put them on the young man, who was still unconscious.

The boy pulled through, thanks to the Doctor and his assistant. When Rantsevich had fully recovered they let him go, although he never concealed from his saviors that he would rejoin Kolchak's troops and continue fighting against the Reds.

After reading the whole novel our thoughts again and again returned to this chapter, for it provides a key to many things. We don't think there is any sense in arguing about the fact that the chapter is written from the position of the author's complete sympathy for Doctor Zhivago and his unqualified justification of his hero's thoughts and actions.

But what are those thoughts and actions? What are you sympathizing with and what are you justifying as an author?

A doctor, mobilized against his will, is forced to live among the partisans. Doctor Zhivago, so you say, had to violate the Red Cross International Convention and take part in the fighting. The people who are attacking the partisans, and the Doctor with them, are handsome, attractive and heroic in his eyes. All his sympathy is with them. They are akin to him in spirit and moral outlook, and he sincerely wishes them success, i.e., it would be no exaggeration to say that in spirit he is on their side. What, then, prevents him from

gaining deliverance and, as you put it, from going over to their side physically as well? Only the mortal danger involved. Nothing else.

Evidently you quite sincerely think that this reason is quite enough, not only to explain, but even to justify your hero's double-dealing. You actually called it more elegantly: "divided emotions." Yet actually "divided emotions" is a rather weak term to apply to a man who is in the defense line with people whom he hates and who opens fire on those whom he loves, merely in order to save his own skin.

Subsequent events, moreover—the Doctor's firing at the charred tree, although he is unwilling to aim at anybody, and picking off three men one after another, who, according to your round-about expression, "crossed the line of fire at the instant of the discharge" —smack of jesuitry, that same jesuitry of which Doctor Zhivago is ready to accuse anyone so frequently, without rhyme or reason. Here your Doctor Zhivago reminds one of a hypocritical monk who observes a fast, transforming meat into fish by the sign of the Cross, with the difference that what is at stake here is not meat or fish but human blood and human lives.

So, within a short space of time, your hero travels a tortuous path of repeated treachery. He sympathizes with the Whites and reaches the point of wanting to go over to them, but once he has made up his mind, he begins shooting, first of all at random but finally at those Whites with whom he sympathizes. Then he feels pity, not for the Whites, but for the Red telephonist who has been killed by the Whites. After that he sympathizes with the young White Guard he has killed and asks himself: "Why did I kill him?" When it transpires that the White Guard has not been killed, but is merely suffering from contusion, he hides him, passes him off as a partisan and lets him go, while remaining with the Reds himself and being aware that the man will rejoin Kolchak's forces and fight against the Reds.

That is how your Doctor Zhivago acts. By this triple if not quadruple betrayal he arouses a feeling of downright revulsion in any spiritually healthy man, or for that matter in any subjectively honest man who, once in his life, has placed his conscience above his safety —even setting aside differences of political opinion.

Yet you use all the power of the talent you possess in order to

justify Zhivago emotionally in this scene, and in that way you arrive, in the last analysis, at a justification of betrayal.

What leads you to that justification? In our opinion it is that same individualism, exaggerated to incredible proportions. In your eyes spiritual wealth is the highest stage of spiritual perfection, and for the sake of preserving this highest spiritual achievement and his own life, as the vessel containing this wealth—for the sake of this, any crime may be committed.

Yet what, after all, is the content of this supreme spiritual wealth of Doctor Zhivago, and what is that spiritual individualism of his which he protects at such a terrible price?

The content of his individualism is self-glorification of his psychic essence, taken to the length of identifying it with the mission of a religious prophet.

Zhivago is a poet and not simply a physician. So as to convince the reader of the real significance of his poetry for mankind, as he understands it, you conclude the novel with a collection of poems written by your hero. You sacrifice the best part of your personal poetic gift for the sake of your hero, in order to extol him in the reader's eyes and at the same time to identify him as closely as possible with yourself.

The cup of Doctor Zhivago's suffering is drained to the dregs, and here are his notes—a behest to the future. What do we find in it? In addition to the verses already published, the poems about Golgotha are of special significance for understanding the philosophy of the novel. This is an undisguised echo of the spiritual anguish of the hero, which is portrayed in the prose part of the novel. The parallel grows distinct to the uttermost degree and the key to it is handed to the reader with almost physical tangibility.

In the poem that concludes the novel, Zhivago speaks of the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. Christ's words to the apostles include the following:

> The Lord esteemed you worthy
> Of living in my day . . .

Isn't this a repetition of what the Doctor had already said when referring to his "friends," those intellectuals who did not act as he himself did? "The only thing that is alive and bright in you is that you have lived at the same time as I and have known me."

Zhivago's whole life story is consistently likened to the Lord's Passion of the Gospels and the Doctor's poetic prophecy concludes with Christ saying:

> To my court of judgment, like a convoy of barges,
> The centuries will float out of the darkness.

This winds up the novel. Its hero, repeating Golgotha as it were, foretells the future recognition of what he has done on earth, for the sake of redemption, with his last Christ-like words.

Didn't Zhivago's Golgotha consist in the fact that the doctor-poet, prophesying his "second coming" and last judgment, in life scorned real man, raising himself up on to a pedestal inaccessible to ordinary mortals? Didn't the vocation of this intellectual messiah consist in the fact that he had killed, betrayed, hated man, for the sake of saving his own 'spirit,' falsely sympathizing with him simply in order to raise himself to the level of self-deification?

Herein lies the entire content of Doctor Zhivago's spiritual wealth, of his hypertrophied individualism. As a matter of fact, the Doctor by no means lives up to his claim to the role of Messiah, since he does not repeat, but misrepresents the prophet of the Gospels deified by him—there is not one jot of Christianity on Doctor Zhivago's gloomy road, for he was concerned least of all for mankind and most of all for himself.

Thus, under cover of superficial sophistication and morality, the character emerges of an essentially immoral man who refuses to do his duty by the people and who claims only the right, and the alleged privilege, of a superman, to betray with impunity.

Having steered safely between the Scylla and Charybdis of the civil war, your Doctor Zhivago dies at the end of the 'twenties after losing touch with those near and dear to him, entering into a rather dubious matrimonial alliance and going very much to seed. A short time before his death, in his conversation with Dudorov and Gordon (they, if you please, personify the old intelligentsia who had begun to co-operate with Soviet power), he awards this intelligentsia a vicious spit.

To what lengths you go in displaying the unfortunate companions of your Zhivago and disparaging them because they did not adopt the attitude of supermen, but went with the revolutionary people through all trials and tribulations!

They "lack sufficient powers of expression," they "have no gift of speech," they "repeat the same thing over and over again to make up for their poor vocabulary." They suffer from the "affliction of mediocre taste, which is worse than the affliction of absence of taste," they are distinguished by their "inability to think freely and control a conversation at their will"; they are "seduced by the stereotyped character of their reasoning"; they "take the imitative nature of their pocketbook feelings to be the universal"; they are "hypocrites" and "bondsmen who worship their bonds," and so on and so forth.

Listening to what they have to say, your Doctor Zhivago, who, as you put it, "could not stand the political mysticism of the Soviet intelligentsia, which was its highest achievement or, as it would then have been said 'the spiritual summit of the epoch,'" arrogantly thinks about his friends who have joined in serving Soviet power: "Yes, my friends, how hopelessly banal are you and the circle you represent, and the glitter and art of your own big names and celebrities. The only thing that is alive and bright in you is that you have lived at the same time as I and have known me."

We advise you to reread carefully those words which are written in your novel. The fact that they are ludicrously arrogant is only half the trouble. Surely you feel that they are mean, quite apart from being arrogant! Truth is rarely a fellow-traveler of bitterness, and this is probably why it is so rare in the pages where your Doctor Zhivago is concluding his life, and in the pages of the Epilogue that follows, written, in our opinion, in a very embittered state of mind and with a very hasty hand—made so hasty, indeed, by bitterness that those pages can only with difficulty be included in the domain of art.

Symbols are not something foreign to you, and the death or rather the dying of Doctor Zhivago at the end of the 'twenties, it seems to us, symbolizes the death of the Russian intelligentsia ruined by the revolution. Yes, we must agree that the climate of the revolution is pernicious for that Doctor Zhivago whom you have portrayed in your novel. And our argument with you is not about that, as we have pointed out, but about something quite different.

Doctor Zhivago, in your opinion, is the acme of the spirit of the Russian intelligentsia.

In our opinion, he is its slough.

In your opinion, the Russian intelligentsia whose road parted with that of Doctor Zhivago and who began to serve the people, went astray from their true goal, spiritually destroyed themselves, and created nothing worthwhile.

In our opinion, it is precisely on this path that they have found their true goal and have continued to serve the people and do precisely what the best section of the Russian intelligentsia did for the people in pre-revolutionary times as they prepared the revolution—then as now infinitely alien to that conscious divorce from the interests of the people, that ideological sectarianism, the bearer of which is your Doctor Zhivago.

To what has been said above we have only to add a few sharp words about the way the people and the years of the revolution are described in your novel. This portrayal, which is given more often than not through the eyes of Doctor Zhivago, or sometimes in the author's text, is highly characteristic of the anti-popular spirit of your novel and is in profound contradiction with the whole tradition of Russian literature, which never fawned upon the common people but was able to see their beauty, power and spiritual wealth. The people portrayed in your novel are either kindly pilgrims who cling to Doctor Zhivago and his friends, or half-beasts who personify the elements of the revolution, or rather the rebellion, the mutiny, according to your conception.

We shall give several quotations to bear out what we have said, this time without comment and selected at random, which will probably be more convincing.

At the beginning of the revolution, when there was a danger, as in 1905, that this time the revolution would again be a short-lived event in the history of the enlightened upper crust, without touching or taking root in the lower strata, no attempt was spared to conduct propaganda among the people, to revolutionize them, to excite them, to stir them up and infuriate them.

In the first days, people like the soldier Panfil Palykh, who without any agitation hated intellectuals, gentry and officers brutally and rabidly, like deadly poison, seemed to be rare finds to the elated left-wing intellectuals and were greatly esteemed. Their total lack of humanity seemed to be a miracle of class-consciousness and their barbarism seemed an example of proletarian firmness and revolutionary

instinct. This was what Panfil was famous for. He was in the good books of the partisan chiefs and the party leaders.

Chairs were placed for the welcome guests and they were occupied by three or four workers, veterans of the first revolution—the morose, scarcely recognizable Tiverzin and his faithful yes-man, old Antipov. Canonized and included in the divine hierarchy, at whose feet the revolution placed its gifts and sacrifices, they sat bolt upright, silent and stern idols, whose political arrogance had eaten away everything alive and humane in them.

This period justified the old adage: *Homo homini lupus est.* A traveler verred off at the sight of a traveler. A passer-by killed a passer-by in order not to be killed himself. There were cases of cannibalism. The human laws of civilization were no longer effective. Animal laws were in force. Men dreamed pre-historic dreams of cave-dwelling.

Many more similar quotations could be given, but those mentioned above are sufficiently typical and give an idea of the people in your novel, or at least that section of them who played an active part in the revolution. This is what your heroes are angry about, and you share this feeling with them.

So far we have scarcely touched on the artistic aspect of your novel. In referring to it, it must be pointed out that, with its general incoherence of subject and composition, and even the 'splintered' character of your novel, the impressions obtained from this or that page do not add up to a general picture and exist without coordination.

There are quite a few first-rate pages, especially where you describe Russian natural scenery with remarkable truth and poetic power.

There are many clearly inferior pages, lifeless and didactically dry. They are especially rife in the second half of the novel.

Yet we would rather not dwell on this aspect since, as we have mentioned at the beginning of the letter, the essence of our argument with you has nothing to do with aesthetic wranglings. You have written a political novel-sermon *par excellence*. You have conceived it as a work to be placed unreservedly and sincerely at the service of certain political aims, and this, which is the main thing for you, has naturally focused our attention as well.

However painful it is to us, we have had to call a spade a spade

in this letter. It seems to us that your novel is profoundly unjust and historically prejudiced in its description of the revolution, the civil war and the years after the revolution, that it is profoundly anti-democratic and that any conception of the interests of the people is alien to it. All this, taken as a whole, stems from your standpoint as a man who tries in his novel to prove that, far from having had any positive significance in the history of our people and mankind, the October Socialist Revolution brought nothing but evil and hardships.

As people whose standpoint is diametrically opposed to yours, we naturally believe that it is out of the question to publish your novel in the columns of the magazine *Novy Mir*.

As for the irritation with which the novel is written—and not your ideological position as such—we, remembering that you have works on your record in which a great deal is different from what you have recently been saying, want to remind you, in the words addressed by your heroine to Doctor Zhivago: "You have changed, you know. Previously you judged the revolution less harshly and without irritation."

But then the main thing is not irritation, of course, because, after all is said and done, that is merely a concomitant of ideas that have long been rejected, untenable and doomed to perdition. If you are able to think about this seriously, please do so. We desire that very much, in spite of everything.

Enclosed is the manuscript of your novel *Doctor Zhivago*.

APPENDIX III

REACTIONARY PROPAGANDA UPROAR OVER A LITERARY WEED

by David Zaslavsky (*Pravda*, October 26, 1958)

THE ENTIRE LIFE of Soviet society is imbued with principles of socialist collectivism. The lying bourgeois legend to the effect that socialism is allegedly hostile to the individual, that it erases and removes individuality, that it hinders the creative development of original men and characters, was refuted by deeds long ago. On the contrary, it is indeed under socialism, in an atmosphere of socialist collectivism, that all conditions are created for the fullest development of creative individuality, for the flowering of original and unique thought. Even bourgeois circles, hostile to socialism, were forced to admit this truth when the Soviet intelligentsia stood before the whole world in the aura of unprecedented achievements in science and culture. Soviet collectivism is the source of the proud patriotic consciousness of Soviet people; it is a school of exalted feelings and ideals, of noble service to the people, the school in which the Soviet citizen is brought up.

But one still comes across individual specimens of the extinct species of bourgeois 'individualists,' small proprietors and petty bourgeois, who have harbored in their souls profound hostility toward the socialist collective throughout the more than forty years of the Revolution. Adherents to this ideology—which has had its day—are sometimes to be found even among men of letters. Such a writer who opposes his self-enamored 'I' to the mighty socialist feeling of 'we,' imagines himself to be a hero of individualism while, in effect, he is a petty bourgeois proprietor who conceals his selfish interests

behind the pompous attire of old-fashioned literature. Such people are profoundly alien to Soviet society and, in their soul, they conceal hostility toward it and feel themselves to be 'superfluous' in it.

The writer Pasternak has turned out to be such a superfluous man, such a lonely individualist in Soviet literature. At one time he was a not ungifted poet, but with his very first literary steps he embarked upon the barren road of anti-realism. His early verse reflected the decade which was called by Gorky the "most despicable" in the history of the Russian intelligentsia. It was a time when renegades from socialism and democracy put up 'landmarks' along the road of their ideological fall and regarded spitting on the entire past of the Russian people and of the Russian revolutionary movement as the supreme manifestation of their petty bourgeois 'spirit.' It was a time when decadents, symbolists and futurists of all kinds were trying to poison Russian literature with the venom of the spiritual corruption of reactionary bourgeoisie.

Pasternak was one of them. His verse was praised by admirers precisely because it was far removed from all realism, had nothing in common with the life of the people and was alien to the clear and pure quality of Russian literary diction by reason of its heaviness, deliberate complexity and abstruseness. It was hard to unravel this complex versification and if one succeeded in doing so one found that it was based on a threadbare thought, devoid of all significance. The confusion of ideas in the poet's head could not fail to be expressed in shapelessness of poetic language.

As is known, the best and leading portion of the Russian intelligentsia, of Russian literature, of Russian art, greeted the Socialist Revolution with tremendous sympathy and devoted its forces to honest service to the people. The historic struggle for the new order, against the forces of bourgeois reaction that had banded together, the heroic deed of the Soviet people which engaged in single combat against the world of oppression, blood and filth, carried along and inspired poets, writers and artists. Gorky and Mayakovsky headed this movement of Soviet intellectuals. Only those in whom the spirit of bourgeois corruption had destroyed everything that was living could stand aside.

Pasternak tried to join this movement, to readjust himself, to become at least a fellow-traveler—as it was called in the past—if not

a direct participant. He wrote the poems *The Year 1905*, *Lieutenant Schmidt*, in which one could read sympathy for the revolutionary democratic movement. But Pasternak did not go any further. Hostility toward Marxism in philosophy, hostility toward realism in literature, were too deep-rooted in the soul of this intellectual, who was bourgeois through and through. Our country marched from victory to victory, a new culture grew and took shape on the basis of socialist construction, new people were being educated; everything was changing around Pasternak, but he remained unchanged. He lagged more and more behind life which was marching forward. He felt that nobody needed him and nobody was interested in him. All the more fierce became his hostility toward the Revolution and Soviet reality.

He could not find the words needed to become a truly Soviet writer, for whom it is a sacred duty and foremost obligation to serve the people. All this was empty verbiage for the self-enamored Narcissus. He thought that everybody was wrong, that only he, in his literary side-alley, was right. He became silent and this literary and artistic powerlessness of his was presented by unwise admirers as proud opposition to socialist realism.

Pasternak did not want to recognize the Socialist Revolution and the Soviet Union, in the same way as reactionary governments hostile to us did not want to recognize our State for a long time. Pasternak was angry with the Revolution. An ironic Russian proverb speaks of an old woman who "spent three years sulking at His Lordship, Novgorod the Great—and the latter did not notice it." Similarly, Pasternak has been sulking at Soviet society and Soviet literature for forty-one years now, yet the great Soviet people did not notice it. This increased Pasternak's irritation with everything Soviet. It seemed to him that there was nothing more important or significant than the experience of an intellectual who had been thrown out of life or, more correctly, who had thrown himself out of it. However, this petty snobbery, parodying old parodies, interested and could interest nobody in Soviet life and literature.

It is obvious that a long stay in the dark corner of his individualism has destroyed in Pasternak any sense of belonging to the Soviet people, destroyed in him the feeling, so habitual to us, of the dignity of the Soviet citizen and patriot. He arranged for himself, of his own

accord, the semblance of an émigré existence. He broke off living ties with the Soviet writers' collective.

In this capacity he has drawn the attention of the bourgeois reactionary press. Dubious correspondents of foreign newspapers began to cling to Pasternak like flies. Absurd rumors were spread that he was some kind of "martyr," that he was being persecuted, that he was prevented from writing, and so on. Foreigners, visiting our country, paid visits to Pasternak and became convinced that these rumors were pure lies. Nobody ever subjected Pasternak to any restraint, nobody persecuted him. The attitude of writers' organizations to Pasternak was tolerant to a high degree, as they thought that this no longer young writer would some day come to reason. Foreigners have seen that Pasternak is very well off in the Soviet Union. He is provided with everything necessary, receives high royalties for translating classical works, has a big country house, and altogether any West European or American writer might envy his position.

The reactionary press began spreading another legend about Pasternak: that he was a great, misunderstood and unacknowledged writer who could have created works of genius if he had not been opposed by the "tyranny of socialist realism." It is a comic legend. The exaggerations in it are grotesque. No one denies Pasternak's literary talent, but it is very limited and never even in his heyday was Pasternak regarded as a top-class writer.

Any honest Soviet writer would regard the compliments paid him by our country's enemies with the greatest contempt. He would without any difficulty spot the political accent in this deliberate and cheap advertisement. The detractors of socialism and democracy caressed and welcomed Pasternak not as a writer but as an embittered philistine. Pasternak, on the other hand, was flattered by this praise of the reactionary bourgeoisie. It seemed to him that he, the unacknowledged prophet in his motherland, could become a prophet of an alien, bourgeois motherland.

The spite which was brimming over in the soul of the superfluous man had been seeking for an outlet, and found it. Pasternak wrote a long novel under the title: *Doctor Zhivago*. It is a malicious lampoon on the Socialist Revolution, on the Soviet people, on the Soviet intelligentsia. The embittered philistine has given vent to his

revengeful gall. He tried to blacken everything new that was ushered in by the Revolution, to justify and extol everything old and counter-revolutionary, going so far as to portray White Guards as saints on an icon. The hero of his novel is a Russian bourgeois intellectual, a petty bourgeois with petty feeling and rotten thoughts. The great Revolution has unsettled him and deprived him of home comforts. He failed to get some rations and could not forgive the Soviet people for it. The bourgeois system of class oppression remained sacred to him and he regarded the working class as a rabble of bestial aspect. The spawn of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie gets the sympathies of Pasternak the author.

Among the satirical heroes of Shchedrin is a character who was of so small a stature that he could not accommodate anything big. In the pettiness of his artistic perception Pasternak also could not accommodate the idea of socialist revolution.

Many bourgeois observers who have visited Russia have not been able to hide their amazement at the majestic scope, at the depth, of the historic events. Through opponents of socialism, they paid the necessary tribute to the heroism of the working class, to the greatness of the designs of the Party and Government. To Herbert Wells Russia seemed to be submerged in darkness, but he spoke with admiration about the heroism of the people, about the Kremlin "dreamers" who were intent on transforming the world. And the contemporary of these events, Pasternak, saw nothing and understood nothing in the great Revolution. And now, after forty years, he maliciously slanders it. This only testifies to the extreme poverty of his own small world, to his extreme bourgeois limitations.

It is ridiculous, but Doctor Zhivago, this infuriated moral freak, is presented by Pasternak as the "finest" representative of the old Russian intelligentsia. This slander of the leading intelligentsia is as absurd as it is devoid of talent. The best part of the intelligentsia was then with Timiryazev, Pavlov, Michurin and Tsiolkovsky. All the world is now witness of how the cadres of the old Russian intelligentsia, in close co-operation with young Soviet scientists, faithfully serving their people, have achieved great unprecedented successes in all branches of science and culture. This could happen precisely because the Soviet authorities and our people have taken and are taking exceptional care of the valuable cadres of intelligentsia, be-

cause they helped them, created all conditions for their creative development. And Pasternak maliciously slanders the Soviet authorities, our heroic people, presenting to the joy of the Soviet Union's enemies a fictitious picture of the destruction of the Russian intelligentsia. Only a person for whom our life is absolutely alien, a fragment of the pre-revolutionary past preserved alive, could slander the Soviet intelligentsia so maliciously.

Pasternak's novel is a political lampoon, and lampoons are not belles-lettres. One can take a tar-brush and thickly tar the fence, but that is not art. Tar is not paint and a tar-brush is not a painter's brush. Pasternak's novel is low-grade reactionary hackwork molded into the form of a literary composition. Novelettes, novels and stories of this kind, which have nothing in common with belles-lettres, used to be published by White émigrés twenty to thirty years ago. The White emigration has degenerated, its literature has completely exhausted itself and disappeared, and Pasternak, the 'internal émigré' living in the Soviet Union, goes back over the same ground. He was always coquetting with his lyric 'refinement,' but now he has displayed primitive vulgarity.

Pasternak for some reason imagined that his day had come, that the time had come when he could take revenge on Soviet society for the fact that he appeared in it as an intruder from the other world, as a weed in the Soviet soil. He seems to have succumbed to that putrid infection which for a very short time swept over some stagnant corners of Soviet literature and enlivened the hopes of the philistines embedded in its chinks. But Pasternak was mistaken. In the autumn of 1956 the editorial board of the journal *Novy Mir* resolutely rejected his novel as blatantly anti-Soviet and anti-artistic, and in its letter to Pasternak, published yesterday in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, gave a comprehensive characterization of that libelous work. That was a warning to Pasternak. But he ignored it and sent the manuscript of his novel abroad where it was published by people who have taken the road of open struggle against socialism, and who, moreover, employed dishonest methods in this matter.

The novel was a sensational discovery for the bourgeois reactionary press. It was taken up triumphantly by the most inveterate enemies of the Soviet Union—obscurantists of various shades, incendiaries of a new world war, provocateurs. Out of an ostensibly literary

event they seek to make a political scandal, with the clear aim of aggravating international relations, adding fuel to the flames of the "cold war," sowing hostility toward the Soviet Union, blackening the Soviet public. Choking with delight, the anti-Soviet press has proclaimed the novel to be the "best" work of the current year, while the obliging grovelers of the big bourgeoisie have crowned Pasternak with the Nobel Prize.

What is it about this novel that has so captivated the enemies of the Soviet Union and socialism? Was it because of its literary merits? No, Pasternak's novel has no such merits and this aspect was the one that least of all interested and interests the masters of the old world. Their real motives have been revealed, for instance, by such a statement made by the AFP agency: "The novel has revealed to the world the permanence of the Russian soul, its radical resistance to Marxism and its attachment to Christian values." And here is how the reactionary press assesses Pasternak's literary merits: "His aesthetic tastes, his philosophical spiritualism, increased as materialism spread round him."

The bourgeois reaction immediately grasped those tendencies which pervade Pasternak's novel. These tendencies were correctly revealed and sharply condemned by the editorial board of *Novy Mir* which, explaining its refusal to print anti-Marxist, anti-Soviet, anti-Communist slanders, pointed out to the author:

> The spirit of your novel is the spirit of nonacceptance of the Socialist Revolution. The burden of your novel is the assertion that the October Revolution, the Civil War and the subsequent changes connected with them have brought to the people nothing but suffering and that the Russian intelligentsia has been destroyed either physically or morally.

The reactionary bourgeoisie has awarded the Nobel Prize not to Pasternak the poet, nor to Pasternak the writer, but to Pasternak the libeler, who has defiled the Socialist Revolution, the Soviet people. Those who have now raised this unseemly uproar have, in their overwhelming majority, never known or read Pasternak, never heard his name, never shown any interest in his out-dated lyrics. They only started to shout about him in connection with his political slander. Some realize that the novel is extremely feeble artistically, if one is not to say, plainly, untalented. They seek to con-

ceal this, praising Pasternak as a lyrical writer. This hypocrisy is to be found in the Nobel Prize award citation. The authors of the citation have not dared to say openly and frankly that they are awarding Pasternak a greasy kiss precisely for the reactionary character of his novel. This is something, however, which cannot be concealed. The Right-wing Finnish newspaper *Uusi Suomi* openly admits that Pasternak, "a hitherto unknown writer, has received a Nobel Prize not for the artistic merit of his works but for political tendencies."

This is fully in accord with the policy of those who award the Nobel Prizes for Literature. Inveterate reactionaries in literature, militant obscurantists, enemies of democracy, preachers of war have received the award. Pasternak has now been admitted to this arch-reactionary fraternity.

Under these circumstances an award from the hands of the enemies of the Soviet country appears an insult to every honest progressive literary man, even though he may not be a Communist, nor even a Soviet citizen, but an upholder of honor and justice, an upholder of humanism and peace. This insult must be all the deeper to a writer who is listed among the ranks of Soviet literature and enjoys all those good things which the Soviet people generously places at the disposal of writers, expecting from them pure works containing noble ideas.

If even a spark of Soviet dignity had been left in Pasternak, if he had any writer's conscience and sense of duty to the people, he would have rejected this 'award' so humiliating for him as a writer. But the inflated self-esteem of an offended and spiteful philistine has left no trace of Soviet dignity and patriotism in Pasternak's soul. By all his activity Pasternak confirms that in our socialist country, gripped by enthusiasm for the building of the radiant Communist society, he is a weed.

APPENDIX IV

TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET WRITERS, EXPELLING PASTERNAK

(October 27, 1958)

ON THE ACTIONS of a member of the USSR Union of Writers, Boris Pasternak, which are incompatible with the calling of a Soviet writer: Resolution of the Praesidium of the Board of the USSR Union of Writers, the Bureau of the Organizing Committee of the RSFSR Union of Writers, the Praesidium of the Board of the Moscow Branch of the RSFSR Union of Writers.

The Praesidium of the Board of the USSR Union of Writers, the Bureau of the Organizing Committee of the RSFSR Union of Writers and the Praesidium of the Board of the Moscow Branch of the RSFSR Union of Writers, at a joint meeting, discussed the actions of Boris Pasternak and came to the unanimous conclusion that these actions were incompatible with the calling of a Soviet writer, were aimed against the traditions of Russian literature, against the people, against peace and socialism. Having once started by declaring for pure art, Pasternak ended by becoming a tool of bourgeois propaganda, a profitable object for the speculation of those circles who organize the cold war, who endeavor to slander all progressive and revolutionary movements.

The reactionary circles approved Pasternak's moral and political downfall not in the least because they valued in him any kind of talent for writing, but because he joined their bitter but hopeless struggle against the onward movement of history. Pasternak's literary activity has long since exhausted itself in egocentric seclusion,

in self-isolation from the people and the times. The novel *Doctor Zhivago*, around which a propaganda uproar has been centered, only reveals the author's immeasurable self-conceit coupled with a dearth of ideas; it is the cry of a frightened philistine, offended and terrified by the fact that history did not follow the crooked paths that he would have liked to allot to it.

The idea of the novel is false and paltry, fished out of a decadent rubbish heap. In actual fact Pasternak is endeavoring to prove that the October Revolution was not inevitable and was unnecessary, at a time when the Soviet Union is celebrating its forty-first anniversary as a mighty and enlightened power, standing in the front ranks of world science and culture. The victory of socialism has already been historically consolidated over enormous territories of Europe and Asia; Pasternak tries to counter progressive thought and the achievements of reform with the cynically individualistic philosophy of the hero of *Doctor Zhivago*. An exhaustive appraisal of the novel *Doctor Zhivago* was given in the letter from writers who were members of the editorial staff of *Novy Mir* in September, 1956.

The Union of Soviet Writers, which has solicitude for the creative art of writers, has for a period of years tried to help Pasternak to understand his errors, to avoid a moral downfall. But Pasternak has severed the last links with his country and its people and transformed his name and his activity into a political weapon in the hands of reaction.

The award of the Nobel Prize to Pasternak, in fact given for the novel *Doctor Zhivago*, hastily covered up by high-falutin words about his lyrics and prose, in reality stresses the political side of the dirty game played by the reactionary circles. It is symptomatic and significant that the same forces are conducting campaigns against the national liberation movements, indulging in military blackmail against the Arab peoples and provocation against People's China, and are making a fuss about Pasternak's name. The award of the Nobel Prize to Pasternak is accompanied by an intensification of the anti-Soviet campaign, which in itself proves the propagandist and nonliterary nature of this award.

The facts are that, unfortunately, it is not the first time that Nobel Prizes for Literature have been awarded to those who serve

the man-hating forces of the cold war, who are organizing crusades against progress and humanism. The Nobel Literary Committee did not notice the universally renowned artistic treasures created by Leo Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky, Mayakovsky, Sholokhov. To make up for this, however, Bunin appeared in the field of its vision only when he had become an active political émigré—and now the renegade Pasternak.

And it is quite understandable why the prize awarded to Pasternak has been assessed in the bourgeois press as the Nobel Prize Against Communism. Honest people, in Sweden itself and in other countries, are openly expressing the view that the Nobel Prize was awarded to Pasternak exclusively for political motives. Therefore, bearing in mind Pasternak's political and moral downfall, his betrayal of the Soviet Union, socialism, peace and progress which was rewarded by the Nobel Prize for the sake of fanning the cold war, the Praesidium of the USSR Union of Writers, the Bureau of the Organizing Committee of the RSFSR Union of Writers and the Praesidium of the Board of the Moscow Branch of the RSFSR Union of Writers deprive Boris Pasternak of the title of Soviet writer and expel him from membership of the USSR Union of Writers.

(*Tass*, October 28, 1958.)

APPENDIX V

V. E. SEMICHASTNY ON PASTERNAK

(October 29, 1958)

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT of V. E. Semichastny at the Ceremonial Plenum of the Central Committee of the Komsomol:

"But, as the Russian proverb says, every flock has its mangy sheep. We have such a mangy sheep in our socialist society in the person of Pasternak, who appeared with his slanderous 'work.' He made our enemies rejoice so much that, without regard for the artistic merits of his book, they awarded him the Nobel Prize. There are works by our masters of the pen which have indisputable artistic merit, but whose authors were not considered worthy of the prize; yet for his slander and low satire against the socialist system, against socialism and Marxism, Pasternak was awarded the Nobel Prize.

"Pasternak has lived for forty-one years in a socialist country; for forty-one years he has lived on the hospitality of a people which built something new on the debris of the past, suffered cold and hunger, but raised old Russia to a new life and created from her a mighty state which astounds all progressive people and inspires fear in the enemies of socialism; a people which went through wars and smashed the fascist hydra. And this man has lived in our country and been better provided for than the average workman who worked, labored and fought. Now this man has gone and spat in the people's face. What can we call this?

"Sometimes, incidentally, we talk about a pig and say this, that or the other about it quite undeservedly.

"I must say that this is a calumny on the pig. As everybody who

has anything to do with this animal knows, one of the peculiarities of the pig is that it never makes a mess where it eats or sleeps.

"Therefore if we compare Pasternak with a pig, then we must say that a pig will never do what he has done. (*Applause*) Pasternak, this man who considers himself among the best representatives of society, has fouled the spot where he ate and cast filth on those by whose labor he lives and breathes. (*Applause*)

"I would like to express my own opinion on this question.

"Why shouldn't this internal emigrant breathe the capitalist air which he so yearned for and which he spoke of in his book? (*Applause*) I am sure that our society would welcome that. (*Applause*) Let him become a real emigrant and go to his capitalist paradise. I am sure that neither society nor the government would hinder him in any way—on the contrary, they would consider that his departure from our midst would clear the air." (*Applause*)

(*Komsomolskaya Pravda*, October 30, 1958.)

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM PASTERNAK TO KHRUSHCHEV, WITH TASS COMMENT

(November 1, 1958)

On November 2 the official Tass Agency published the following letter from Pasternak to Khrushchev:

Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
To Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev.

Respected Nikita Sergeyevich: I am addressing myself to you personally, to the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and to the Soviet Government. I have learned from the speech made by V. Semichastny that "the Government would not put any obstacle to my departure from the Soviet Union."

For me this is impossible. I am linked with Russia by my birth, life, and work. I cannot imagine my fate separate from and outside Russia. Whatever my mistakes and errors, I could not imagine that I would be in the center of such a political campaign as started to be fanned around my name in the West. Having become conscious of that, I informed the Swedish Academy of my voluntary renunciation of the Nobel Prize.

A departure beyond the borders of my country would for me be equivalent to death, and for that reason I request you not to take that extreme measure in relation to me.

With my hand on my heart, I can say that I have done something for Soviet literature and I can still be useful to it.

B. Pasternak

Tass added this comment:

The bourgeois press has spread stories that Pasternak was deprived of his right to go abroad. And this is a crude invention. As became known, Pasternak has not so far applied to any Soviet body with a request for a visa to leave for abroad, and from the side of

these State bodies there has not been, nor will there be, any refusal to give him a visa.

In the event of Pasternak's expressing a wish to leave the Soviet Union forever, the State and people whom he slandered in his anti-Soviet work *Doctor Zhivago* and the State bodies concerned will not raise any obstacles. He will be given the opportunity to leave the Soviet Union and personally experience all the charms of the capitalist paradise.

APPENDIX VII

LETTER FROM PASTERNAK TO *Pravda*

(November 5, 1958)

I AM ADDRESSING the Editorial Board of the newspaper *Pravda* with a request to publish my statement. I have been impelled to do so by my respect for the truth.

Just as everything that happened to me was the natural consequence of my actions, so all my acts concerning the award of a Nobel Prize to me were just as free and voluntary. I assessed the award of the Nobel Prize as a literary distinction, I was delighted and expressed this in a cable to Anders Esterling, the Secretary of the Swedish Academy.

But I was mistaken. I had reasons for this mistake because I had been earlier nominated as candidate for the prize; for instance, five years ago, when my novel did not yet exist.

After a week, when I saw the scope of the political campaign around my novel and realized that this award was a political step which has now led to monstrous consequences, I conveyed my voluntary rejection on my own initiative and without any compulsion.

In my letter to Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, I declared that I had been linked with Russia by birth, life and work and that it was unthinkable for me to leave her and to go into exile abroad. Speaking of this link I had in mind not only kinship with her land and nature but, of course, also with her people, her past, her glorious present and her future. But between myself and this link there has risen up a barrier of obstacles engendered by the novel through my own fault.

I never had the intention to harm my State or my people. The Editorial Board of *Novy Mir* warned me that the novel might be

understood by the readers as a work directed against the October Revolution and the foundations of the Soviet system. I did not appreciate this and I regret it now.

Indeed, if one bears in mind the conclusions arising from the critical analysis of the novel, it follows that I supposedly adhered in the novel to the following erroneous theses. It seems that I assert that any revolution is a historically illegitimate phenomenon, that the October Revolution was one of such illegitimate events, that it brought Russia misfortunes and led the Russian traditional intelligentsia to its destruction.

It is clear to me that I cannot accept such assertions carried to absurdity. Yet my work, which was awarded a Nobel Prize, gave rise to such grievous interpretation and this is the reason why in the end I rejected the prize.

If the publication of the book had been suspended, as I asked my publisher in Italy to do (the editions in other countries were put out without my knowledge), I would probably have succeeded at least partially in correcting this. But the book has been printed and it is too late to talk of this.

In the course of this tempestuous week I have not been persecuted, I have not risked either my life or my freedom, I have risked absolutely nothing. I should like to emphasize once again that all my actions are voluntary. People who are closely acquainted with me know full well that nothing in the world can compel me to act hypocritically or against my conscience. The same is true in this case. It goes without saying that no one put any pressure on me and that I am making this statement of my free will, with a bright faith in the future of society and in my own, with pride in the time I live in and in the people who surround me.

I believe I shall find the strength to restore my good name and the confidence of my comrades.

(Signed) B. PASTERNAK, November 5, 1958

(*Pravda*, November 6, 1958.)

APPENDIX VIII

RADIO MOSCOW ON OLGA IVINSKAYA: I

(Broadcast in English on January 21, 1961)

HERE NOW are the facts of the Olga Ivinskaya case, presented by our observer Yuriy Ivanov:

People close to outstanding men of arts or letters make things for themselves in various ways. History knows of many instances of selfless patronage shown by true friends of artists, composers and writers. There's no need to list the names; they are sufficiently well known. Some wrote memoirs containing interesting details of the great man's life and work, facts which for some reason had been concealed from society; others made the literary heritages known to an appreciative public; still others worked to give consummation to the deceased artist's creative ideas, and so on. Some devoted a lifetime to this work and posterity, in recalling this or that man of the arts or letters, is eternally grateful to those who helped humanity enter the creative studio of the artist by supplying memorable details of the artist's biography.

Olga Ivinskaya, although she was a professional literary translator, was attracted by an entirely different phase: finance. It was in this sphere that she displayed outstanding ability and extensive knowledge. Taking advantage of her closeness to the writer Boris Pasternak and his trust, she advised him to refuse to accept the royalties that had been transferred to him by a number of foreign banks through official channels. Her arguments would seem very convincing to the naïve. Indeed, the writer handed over his book to an Italian publisher, Feltrinelli, a book that had been denounced by the Soviet literary public as anti-patriotic and slanderous. This book was gladly accepted in the West, it was published, and was even awarded the Nobel Prize.

Western lovers of fishing in muddy waters then raised a hullabaloo and engaged in foul play in connection with this book. The writer realized his mistake and publicly renounced the prize. But then the royalties started coming in. Olga Ivinskaya, who enjoyed the writer's trust, was far from simple-minded. These royalties should not be touched, she advised him, since they came from an anti-patriotic novel. Money for this gives off a bad stench. However, as it later came to light, it is only from the point of view of the ethical standards of society that this money gives off a stench, not from Olga Ivinskaya. So they refused official royalties, and here by all rights the story should end.

But the Western benefactors were persistent. If they were driven out of the door they returned through the window, and Olga Ivinskaya's noble gesture in renouncing royalties turned out to be, upon checking, a theatrical gesture of a decrepit actress aimed at misleading public opinion.

Big sums of Soviet money began flowing in to Olga Ivinskaya not through the post or telegraph, that is, not through legitimate channels; quite the contrary. Packets of money were handed over to her in some hotel, at her country home, or even gateway, by some Western correspondent who had brought this money in unlawfully across the border, or by some foreign postgraduate student who received Soviet money through diplomatic channels from some Western Embassy in Moscow. . . .

Olga Ivinskaya began accepting money from anyone who brought it, and not only money but nylon coats and other commodities bought with the royalties from foreign sources. Much buying and selling was done. One ill-fated Frenchman, Georges Nivat, had his eye on the royalties banked abroad and gave his heart and hand to Ivinskaya's daughter. This nobleness was rewarded. Ivinskaya instructed Feltrinelli to pay the fiancé 10,000 dollars. Ivinskaya was soon involved in feverish activity. The telephone rang at her flat and voices with varying accents suggested a meeting somewhere to hand over current payment to Madame. And Ivinskaya's daughter, Irina Yemilianova, a student at the Gorky Literary Institute in Moscow, was drawn into these activities. Her mother involved her in all her contraband dealings.

The incoming sums kept mounting. Last August, for instance,

after the writer's death, certain foreign tourists brought half a million Soviet roubles to Olga Ivinskaya's country home. The money, according to Madame, was carefully wrapped up in yellow wax paper covered with red flowers. They told her that the amount would be increased. Somewhere in the West they were obviously in a hurry. They knew that Soviet currency was to be replaced, so they tried to get rid of the old currency which had made its way abroad through various impermissible channels. All in all Olga Ivinskaya received more than 800,000 roubles.

Olga Ivinskaya isn't a naïve little girl. She knew that by accepting Soviet currency brought from abroad she was committing a crime, breaking Soviet laws. She knew all this. For one, she left money with her acquaintances: some didn't even know what the parcels she gave them contained. She kept her meetings with these envoys from abroad a deep secret. She was even sent four halves of foreign banknotes and, as she testified at the questioning, she had been instructed to match the halves brought by the visitors as a password for those who were to meet her secretly in Moscow.

Olga Ivinskaya did all these things in the name of the late Boris Pasternak, claiming to be his benefactress. The writer's anti-patriotic act had been denounced by the Soviet public. But these dark criminal doings went on behind the writer's back during his lifetime as well. Even then this benefactress managed to deceive her patron and diverted a large part of his royalties into her own pocket.

Here's another point worth mentioning: the late writer has legal heirs, a wife and children. Yet those who sent the money to Olga Ivinskaya, and she herself, did their utmost to prevent the family of the deceased from finding out about their embezzling these funds.

This letter taken from Ivinskaya on her arrest was addressed by Feltrinelli not to Pasternak's heirs but to Ivinskaya. It reads in part: "You must however bear in mind the following: (1) the former contract with Boris Pasternak regarding publication of *Doctor Zhivago*, as well as the new contract which I request that you send me as soon as possible, must not get into the hands of the authorities or Pasternak's family. All these secret documents must never be found on your person. (2) Send me all other documents that you have which might be useful to me. Everything I receive will be

regarded as coming from Pasternak directly. (3) I shall not rest until all of Pasternak's letters and manuscripts are in the West. I shall always see to it that the greater part of the profit goes to you and Irina."

The testimony given by the witnesses in the case, the evidence submitted, the letters found and testimony of experts proved the guilt of Olga Ivinskaya and her daughter Irina Yemilianova, indicted as her accomplice. Ivinskaya told the court that all the evidence in the case was absolutely true, and there was nothing she could refute. She pleaded guilty to having formed criminal contacts with foreign nationals, beginning with 1959, and to having received from them Soviet currency smuggled into the country. Olga Ivinskaya admitted repeatedly having repeatedly received large sums of Soviet money from some Western Embassy in Moscow or even from "His Lordship." The latter, Count Leo Paladini, didn't even refuse remuneration for this service. Without blinking an eyelash he accepted 2,000 roubles. This reminds us of the character in Gogol's *Inspector General*, Khlestyakov, who readily accepted handouts to cover what he invariably called "unforeseen expenses." All in all she received 300,000 roubles from them. At the end of July, 1960, she received half a million roubles from Italian tourists. Olga Ivinskaya told the court that feeling criminal responsibility she left approximately 500,000 roubles with acquaintances for safekeeping.

Olga Ivinskaya was convicted under paragraph 13 of the Penal Code for State crimes. Irina Yemilianova was also sentenced as an accomplice in the case.

The smuggling of foreign currency is punishable in every country. Consequently, those who brought Soviet currency across the border to Ivinskaya were also committing a crime. It happens sometimes that concern for a person with whom one is intimate takes this unworthy form. What can be said of this benefactress who pocketed about one million roubles? Perhaps it would be in place to remember the words of Prince Hamlet about the perfidiousness and short memory of his mother: "Frailty, thy name is woman! A little month; or ere those shoes were old with which she followed my poor father's body, like Niobe, all tears." These lines help us to get a fuller picture of the limits of honesty of certain people.

APPENDIX IX

RADIO MOSCOW ON OLGA IVINSKAYA: II

(Broadcast in Italian on January 27, 1961)

We now give details of the illegal currency operations scandal in which Olga Ivinskaya, private secretary to the author, the late Boris Pasternak, the Italian publisher Feltrinelli and a number of other persons are involved:

The Moscow General Post Office: sums of money sent by mail or telegraph are often received there, but Olga Ivinskaya, private secretary to the late Boris Pasternak, is a woman who entered that hall regularly, once a month, on the first day of the month, exactly at 11 a.m. But she never went near the postal-order counter; quietly, looking around furtively, she would greet this or that person, waiting in a prearranged place and, after receiving from their hands a small suitcase, she would go off. In addition to the meetings at the post office, Olga Ivinskaya also had appointments at a Moscow music shop or just in the street. Once, when Olga Ivinskaya was ill, her daughter, Irina Yemilianova, with her brother Mitya, went to the secret rendezvous. Irina was handed the case and Mitya acted as porter. The small cases were taken to Ivinskaya's flat: here they were opened and money was taken out, ordinary Soviet money: a lot of money, but it had not been earned, or left in a will, or won at the races: it had been brought into the Soviet Union illegally from abroad: from Italy, from the Federal Republic of Germany, from France.

Some time ago the writer Boris Pasternak sent the novel *Doctor Zhivago* abroad, to be published. The writer's mother country had refused to acknowledge that work, considering it antipatriotic and slanderous. The writer later officially refused the Nobel Prize,

awarded to him in Sweden, and the royalties for the novel *Doctor Zhivago*. But Olga Ivinskaya, Boris Pasternak's private secretary, decided, as it is said in the West, to do business on the strength of his name, of his literary work. Not that she was poor, no: her translations of poetry brought her more money that she and her family could spend, but the dream of fantastic riches impelled her to crime and she began to trade Pasternak's name, wholesale and retail. The more the author's health declined, the greater grew the trade; even death did not stop business. The men abroad who were making enormous profits from *Doctor Zhivago* began to send Olga Ivinskaya the money obtained through this scandalous business. Money in her flat snowballed; here is the chronological order of its arrival:

In February, 1959, Ivinskaya's daughter, Irina Yemilianova, whom Pasternak, despite his promises, had not adopted, received 12,000 roubles from a French student, Georges Nivat, who was at Moscow University on a postgraduate course. Between May, 1959, and April, 1960, she received from West German and Italian journalists 260,000 roubles. In February, 1960, the correspondent of the Italian paper *Il Punto*, Leo Paladini, who went to Moscow with an important delegation, handed her 40,000 roubles. In August, 1960, the Benedetti couple, again from Italy, handed Ivinskaya 500,000 roubles. This was the last sum she received.

Where did these people get Soviet roubles from? They got them mainly from a great capitalist publisher in Italy, Giangiacomo Feltrinelli. He bought them on the black market in Italy. Feltrinelli himself wrote about this to Ivinskaya. As you see, the sources of the money received by Ivinskaya and Yemilianova were illegal deals in Soviet currency, the smuggling of which is an offense against international law. This was known to Ivinskaya and to her daughter; it was also known to Feltrinelli and to all those persons who were making use of the hospitality of the Soviet country and served as intermediaries in these maneuvers, receiving their share of profit. They knew that they were committing a criminal offense and therefore acted in secret, concealed themselves, did everything to avoid being found out. For instance, the Italian Giulio Benedetti and his wife came to the Soviet Union in their car, but to convey

500,000 roubles, well parceled up, to Ivinskaya's flat, they did not use their car: to avoid attracting attention they took a taxi.

All this was told by Olga Ivinskaya and Irina Yemilianova during the preliminary investigation and the trial. They also told of how the foreigners who brought money in for them made ample use of the diplomatic bag, which is not subject to customs inspection: this, of course, with the agreement of the respective embassies accredited to Moscow. All these persons were so afraid of the punishment to which their crimes made them liable that they worked out a whole conspiratorial system, similar to those usually described in thrillers. They had everything: a code language, clandestine meetings, aliases and even identification tokens: an Italian currency note cut in half was used as an identification token.

Altogether Olga Ivinskaya and Irina Yemilianova obtained by smuggling from abroad money and valuables to a value of approximately 1,000,000 roubles. It is interesting to note that the greatest part of this money was handed to them after Pasternak's death. The writer's legitimate heirs, his wife and children who live in Moscow, did not receive a single penny either from Feltrinelli or from other publishers; on the contrary, Feltrinelli took a lot of trouble to prevent the author's heirs knowing about this money. In a letter written by him from Milan to Olga Ivinskaya, dated July 8, 1960, that is, after Pasternak's death, Feltrinelli said that no paper relating to their business must fall into the hands of the authorities or of Pasternak's relations: "I shall always arrange for the greatest share of the profits to come to you," wrote Feltrinelli. Indeed, after Pasternak's death Feltrinelli and his accomplices zealously concealed from the author's sister, Lydia Slater, who lives in England, their intrigues with Ivinskaya. After Pasternak's death Feltrinelli wrote to Ivinskaya on June 24, 1960: "Boris's sister Lydia has now written from London, very agitated: she wanted to know whether Pasternak had entrusted me with anything, exactly what, and whether any advantage would derive to the family. I gave her a noncommittal answer. May I give you a word of advice? Do not talk anything over in Moscow. Be very generous, if necessary, even in monetary matters. There may be some dangerous enemies." The originals of these letters and many others were found in Ivinskaya's possession at the time of her arrest and were turned over to the Court.

But how can we explain such a strong attachment on the part of the Western literature dealers to Ivinskaya and her accomplice, her daughter? On close inspection the reasons for this attachment look strictly prosaic and commercial. Feltrinelli did not conceal his greed: "I shall not rest," he wrote, "until all Pasternak's manuscripts and letters are in the West." At the same time, among the shareholders of this company of thieves and speculators, there appeared persons with a rather unusual role for businessmen: the fiancés. There were three of them: two West Germans and one Frenchman. The procession of fiancés began with the Moscow correspondent of the Deutsch Rundfunk, the West German radio, Gerd Ruge. But the Ruge-Yemilianova wedding did not take place; not because the fiancée was put off by the young man's position in West German society—his position was not so bad: Gerd Ruge is the nephew of Admiral Ruge, that very Ruge who served Hitler and was declared one of the greatest war criminals. There was, however, a but, which proved insurmountable: Gerd Ruge was already married.

Fiancé No. 2 was one of Ruge's compatriots: Erich Schewe, correspondent of the West German paper *Die Welt*. The would-be mother-in-law liked him best of all, but Irina did not become Schewe's wife, apparently from purely feminine reasons. Fiancé No. 3 was the youngest: he was just twenty-five and was French. His name was Georges Nivat and he had come to Moscow as a student and took a postgraduate course at Moscow University. Nivat was studying the work of a decadent poet of the early twentieth century, Andrey Bely, but Georges was pleased to receive a salary for his love. Ivinskaya told this during her interrogation.

The role of Hymen was played by the publisher Feltrinelli, who paid Nivat 10,000 dollars; but as the saying goes, the more you have the more you want. The last memory this petty thief had of the Soviet Union was a touching encounter with Soviet customs officials at the Moscow Sharemetyevo airport. In an impersonal report in the customs records it is stated that on August 10, 1960, French francs, U.S. dollars, Finnish marks and Soviet roubles were seized from the French citizen Georges Nivat, who was about to export them illegally from the Soviet Union. Perhaps he wanted to take them with him to France as a poetic souvenir and, at the same time, as a

modest material compensation for the wound in his heart which he sustained in Moscow.

So the last page of this sordid story is closed: the Moscow City Court, on behalf of millions of Soviet citizens whose land has been besmirched by these dregs of society, bought with dollars, lire, francs and marks, has pronounced sentence: In accordance with Article 15 of the Penal Law on Crimes against the State, Olga Ivinskaya was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment. Irina Yemilianova, in accordance with Article 17 of the Principles of the Penal Code of the USSR and of the Union Republics and with Article 15 of the Penal Law on State Crimes, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Olga Ivinskaya and Irina Yemilianova were granted the right of appeal, in accordance with Soviet law, but the RSFSR Supreme Court, after examining their appeal, confirmed the sentence of the Moscow City Court. The mother and daughter, who have dishonored the noble title of Soviet citizens, are now serving their sentence.

I. Pasternak's Books
(with date of writing and of first Russian edition)

POETRY:

A Twin in a Cloud
Written 1913; published 1914.

Above the Barriers
Written 1914–16; published 1917.

Both the above republished together 1931, under the latter title.

My Sister, Life
Written 1917; published 1922.

Themes and Variations
Published 1923.

The Year 1905

Lieutenant Schmidt
Published 1927.

Spectorsky

Second Birth
Published 1932.

Collected Works
Published 1933 and 1936.

In Early Trains
Written 1936–41; published 1942.

The Sapper's Death
Published 1943.

Terrestrial Expanse
Published 1945.

PROSE:

The Childhood of Luvers
Written 1918.

Il Tratto di Apelle
Written 1915.
Letters from Tula
Written 1918.
Aerial Ways
Written 1924.
The four above published in one volume, 1925; reprinted 1933, under the title *Aerial Ways*.
Dissertations on Art
Published 1922.
Safe Conduct
Published 1931.
The Last Summer: A Tale
Published 1934.

All these works have appeared in a number of translations and collections in English and other languages. The collection *Safe Conduct:* An Autobiography and Other Writings (New York, 1958) contains, in addition to the title piece, three of the stories and a selection of the poems, translated by various hands.

In addition, books not published in Russian which have appeared in the West are:
Doctor Zhivago, translated by Max Hayward and Manya Harari, New York, 1958.
I Remember, Sketch for an Autobiography, translated by David Magershack, New York, 1959. Includes the essay "Translating Shakespeare" (translated by Manya Harari), first published in the Moscow almanac *Literary Moscow*, No. 1, 1956.
Poems 1955–1959, translated by Michael Harari, London, 1960.
Note: The trilogy of plays *The Blind Beauty*, which Pasternak left uncompleted at his death, has not been made available in or outside Russia. The same applies to a collection of his letters which was being edited by Mrs. Olga Ivinskaya at the time of her arrest.

II. Other Sources

IN ENGLISH:
The Poetry of Boris Pasternak, 1917–1959, selected, edited and translated by George Reavey, New York, 1959.
Poems by Boris Pasternak, translated by Eugene M. Kayden, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1959.
C. M. Bowra, *The Creative Experiment*, London, 1949.
Leo Gruliow, ed., *Current Soviet Policies II*, New York, 1957. (For Khrushchev's Secret Speech to the Twentieth Party Congress.)

D. S. Mirsky, *A History of Russian Literature*, New York, 1949.
D. Pedoe, *The Gentle Art of Mathematics*, London, 1958.
K. Sinha, ed., *Boris Pasternak*, Calcutta, 1959.
Gleb Struve, *Soviet Russian Literature 1917–1950*, Norman, Okla., 1951.
_____, *Twenty-five Years of Soviet Literature*, London, 1944.

IN RUSSIAN:
The Soviet Literary Encyclopaedia.
The Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 1st and 2nd Editions.
The Small Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd Edition.
Literaturnaya Moskva I and II, Moscow, 1956–57.
Stenographic Report of the Constituent Congress of the Writers of the RSFSR, Moscow, 1959.
The Complete Works and Letters of Chekhov, Moscow, 1954 etc.
Vladimir Dudintsev, *Not by Bread Alone*, Moscow, 1956.
Ilya Ehrenburg, *The Thaw*, Part I, Moscow, 1954.
Konstantin Fedin, *Writer, Art, Time*, Moscow, 1957.
Lyubov Kabo, *The Difficult Campaign*, Moscow, 1957.
Mikhail Sholokhov, *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Moscow, 1953 and 1956–57.

IN ITALIAN:
Problems and Realities of the USSR, Rome, 1957.

The many newspaper and periodical sources are cited in footnote references throughout the text.